LEGENDS

ISSUE #114
SEPT, 2001

THE DARKER THE MUSIC...
THE BRIGHTER THE MIND!

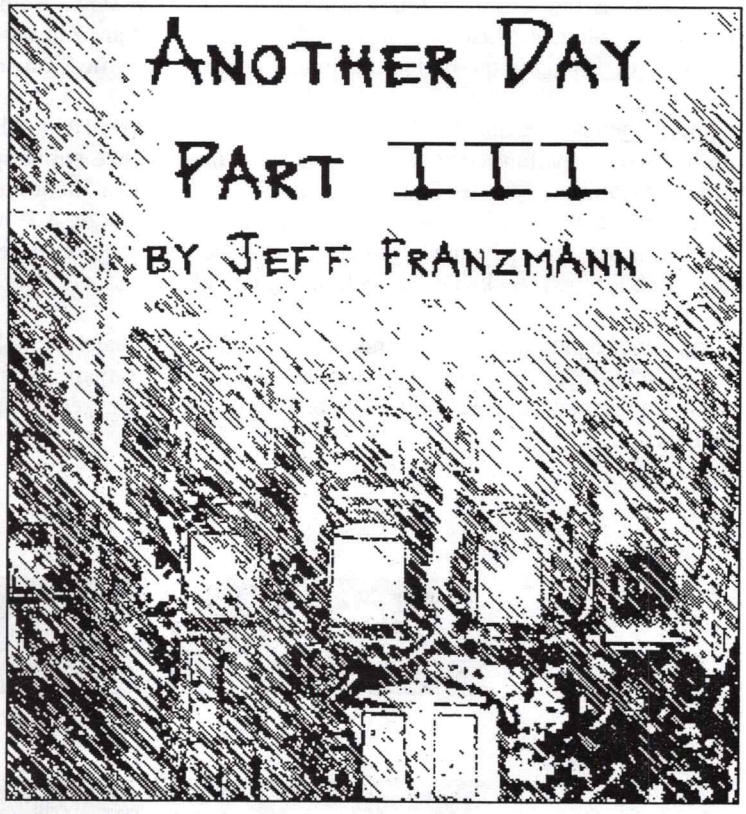
REVIEWS INSIDE:

AUTUMN TEARS
IN THE NURSERY
JOHN LUDI
STENDHAL
GABOR CSUPO
ARISE FROM THORNS
CYBERNETIC EROSION
CTRL
PETER MILLER
AND MORE!

DEUS EX MACHINA

FICTION BY DAVID WILKINS
OUR NEWEST AUTHOR!

INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST CHRISTOPHER
BY NEW WRITER
AZRIEL J. KNIGHT



THE PARKING LOT IS FULL
by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek

OTHER STUFF TOO

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Editor: Marcus Pan

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Illustrators: The Parking Lot is Full, Zubrovka, Deathfish

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Info

About the cover artists: On this month's cover are clips by **The Parking Lot is Full, Zubrovka,** and mixed up by me.

About the Illustrators: Both **Zobrovka** and **Deathfish** appear with some of our fiction this month. And also, the first full-page episode of **The Parking Lot is Full**!

About the writers: We feature a new writer this month. **Azriel J. Knight**'s interview with **Christopher** appears. Our featured fiction this month is the return of **Jeff Franzmann**'s *Another Day*. Both **Mike Ventarola** and **The Mean Little Man** appear with their respective columns. Also appearing with music reviews are **Zubrovka, Rat Bastard**, me, **Chris Eissing** and others who I've already mentioned. Filling in the fiction this month is more from **Sue Simpson** and the continuing *Rivulet* two part series from **Lad Moore**.

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Editor's Notes

How goes kiddies? Strangely enough, I didn't have all that much to say last month. I think it's the first issue in history that didn't have an *Editor's Notes* or *Afterword* column. If I remember back a month (memory is the first thing to go…), I think I was running behind schedule and needed to crank the issue out, so I decided not to talk and just crank. No masturbation jokes from the peanut gallery…

So I think we have some good stuff this issue. I really like **Lad Moore**'s *Rivulet* series, and I'm hoping to get more of his work. Of course **Sue Simpson** returns to us. One of her most warped out pieces yet appears with *Laughing Eyes*. **Jeff Franzman**'s *Another Day* appears in its third part. And the big news is the first full page slot by **The Parking Lot is Full** and a new writer's contribution to our music depart, **Azriel J. Knight** and his interview with **Christopher**.

Carry Shit in Style with the Legends Messenger Bag! Aww yeah!

A moment of thanks to the entire staff. Everything is right on schedule this month, which means I can spend all next week turning the water in my pool from aqua to clear blue. For those that were here and may remember from the **Convergence 7** party at my place, you'll note that its current condition is better than the dark green it was then. Rock on's to **Rat Bastard** for picking up my slack at **Convergence 7**. We have interviews with **Unto Ashes, DJ Voltaire** and **Sunshine Blind** stemming from the weekend's festivities.

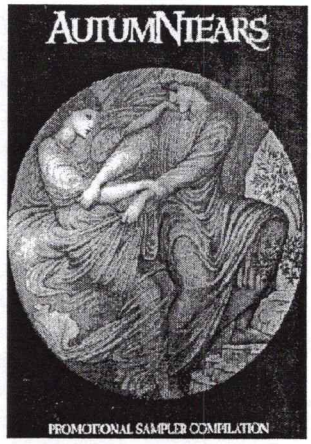
Also in the works is a film review of **Raven Film**'s *American Rumble*. In depth interview with artist **Blue** that will cover his work in all forms – art, independent film, multiple music projects and whatever else comes to mind. **Artofact Records** will be giving us exclusive interviews with **Massiv in Mensch, Psyche** and **Netz** over the course of the next few months as well. And in the works right now is new Legends merchandise! Rock on's to **The Mean Little Man** who is heading up stores for these items.

So check it out…check it all out.

Marcus Pan
August 26, 2001
4:24AM

REVIEW: AUTUMN TEARS – PROMO

By Marcus Pan



From a single gloomy idea rose what is amounting to be a virtual empire on the landscape of dark ethereal and ambient music. Erika and Ted, duo behind the enigmatic Autumn Tears, are also the driving force behind record label Dark Symphonies. This label is unleashing upon the musical audiences of the world some of the best dark ambient and ethereal music CDs. DS seems to have been created as a vehicle for the music of Autumn Tears, but like many small independent record labels have increased to the point of releasing new and re-releasing previously unavailable works from other bands of like styles.

But while I'd love to go on about the work of Dark Symphones (see my review of DS release Arise From Thorns, **Before an Audience of Stars**, in this issue) I must beg off of this because in this article we are discussing the work of the musical outfit that seems to have been the catalyst: Autumn Tears. With four releases, **Love Poems for Dying Children, Acts I – III** and **Absolution**, AT's legacy reaches as far back as late 1995. Their latest work, **Love Poems for Dying Children, Act III: Winter and the Broken Angel**, has received worldwide acclaim and became the ending of their previous **Love Poems** releases, closing a tapestry of dark imagery and depression-inducing ambience.

Combining elements of classic, ambience, ethereal and more to weave creations of frightening intensity, Dark Symphonies has put out a limited edition promo release that contain tracks that run the gamut off all four releases. Through the disc I found myself shifting moods, as the music held here rolls out around me, steeping me in a tangible sadness and washing me with tears.

First impressions of the music is that it's very churchy. Strong haunting vocals combined with classical style arrangement brings back medieval movements and scores. Poetic lyrics sometimes in spoken word form, but always passionate and full bodied.

The Grand Celebration (from **Act III**) is a powerful track to open this promotional sampler of their work. It ends abruptly and *The Eloquent Sleep* (**Act I**) begins a piano-driven score that I find very reminiscent of ambient work by Midnight Syndicate. The later bright piano melody that comes through above the chord hits and strings is brilliantly written and would appeal to fans of classical works from composers of old. Tracks like *The Never* shows the wide range that Erika is capable of, pushing the skills envelope for diva vocalists everywhere.

Of similar note is *The Passion and the Fury* (**Act III**), a wonderful duet aria. About halfway through the album Autumn Tears begins to mix in sound effects into their arrangements, using the sounds of rain, thunder and similar oft-used noises to good effect. The music also takes on an operatic and showmanship bent similar to what In Gowan Ring does on their earlier works. I love the piano melodies of *Autumn Requiem* (**Act III**). Simple yet moving, nimble and bright combining beautifully with the on-high sighs of vocal intonations. A strange track for AT, when you think of the much darker aesthetic that is imbued throughout the body of their work.

This My Melancholic Masquerade (**Act II**) is a surprising change from the past-world arrangements of the previous nine tracks. This one is decidedly synth-based, but retains a string quality to make it nonetheless mesh well with the other offerings here. But you'll find yourself suddenly being thrust into a much more modern setting here. The promo disc ends with *Black Heaven* (**Act II**), which is a very dark, frightening piece of music, something I'd more expect from Midnight Syndicate. It closes the CD on an evil bent.

Autumn Tears' music is certainly not for everybody. This is music for the introspective connoisseur, something to listen to as you delve deep down into yourself, whether it be for discovery or hiding. And while you'll find that you are being bombarded with brooding and melancholic arrangements, when all is said and done it has the effect of helping you realize that things can be much worse. It opens the gates of hopelessness and you realize that at least you still have some hope for yourself.

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THE MEAN LITTLE COLUMN
"MAKING A WISH FOR STEM CELLS "

Ok. It's 7 months into his presidency and Mr. Bush is taking a 4-week vacation. What the hell! At most jobs you'll only get one week worth of vacation a year. And usually there's a 3-6 month probationary period. I was most surprised that the Dow didn't skyrocket and gas prices drop the minute he left the White House.

So for the past month CNN gets to show me George Bush as he rides around in Golf Cart 1, the Presidential Golf Cart. Giving me Bush's hourly nonsensical, non-informative musings on the Middle East and stem cells. I ain't touching the Middle East today. I can say this: Clinton, no war, but some violence. Bush, war soon, hourly violence. As for the other hot topic…

It seems that in an unborn fetus there are these magical little cells that can be anything we want them to be when they grow up. If we take these cells, called stem cells, and put them into a heart, they can become healthy heart cells. They can become eye cells, ass cells. The biggie though, is they have also shown the ability to become nerve cells.

This could help the numerous thousands that suffer from neurological diseases and disorders like Parkinson's and CF. Also, it could give hope to Christopher Reeve and everyone else who accidentally busted their asses up and have wound up paralyzed. But here's the rub. These cells have to come from an embryo. You can harvest ample stem cells in the first trimester.

The question is, is it life, or isn't it? Is it murder if we're taking the stem cells? Kind of the devil you know vs. the devil you don't. An embryo may be life and not taking it for stem cell treatments or research appeases the old white men of the moral right. However, if we go so far as to take these stem cells a lot of kids might fucking walk!

I love this. No one gives a shit that we induce pregnancy in horses so we can grind their placentas into our shampoo so we can achieve that Prell shine. No one bitches about donating kidneys, sperm, or anything else. But if it's a fertilized ovum everyone loses their fucking minds. We are not talking about killing babies here people. We are talking about removing a cluster of cells one tenth the size of my left nut.

One embryo may be life or it may not be. But one embryo could definitely be life for a number of children. One embryo could knock the shakes right out of Michael J. Fox, or allow Christopher Reeve to be able to make love to his wife one more time. Fucking amazing.

Here's a write-in campaign for ya:

Dear Make A Wish Foundation,

My wish is that the old white right-wing people will let stem cell research happen so that maybe some day I will be able to fucking walk!

There's a fucking wish for you. Walking.

I love the Make a Wish Foundation. I love the feel good stories on the news. "Here we see Mark McGuire and little Timmy in the hospital. Timmy passed away less than 2 hours later. Timmy was 6." You never hear about when Mark McGuire shows up 2 hours late.

I have a huge Make a Wish reason for stem cells. For every cute little 8-year old terminally ill child that everyone is sad for, there's a kid that will never be cute because his ailment has made him less than TV-friendly. And for every less-than TV-friendly kid there's a socially inept jerkoff of a 23-year-old virgin with terminal cancer, halitosis, who'd give his left nut for a fucking blowjob.

Where's his Make a Wish foundation? After 18 people are less worthy of having their dreams fulfilled by the community? Or is this something the families lobbied for once they realized that getting a jukebox may fulfill Uncle Ed's dying wish, but its one more fucking thing to cart to the curb when hospice kicks in.

Regardless, where's the wish fulfillment for the 30 year old that's never had a hummer? Where's the bi-experience little Sally has wished for, for 21 years? When does Bobby get to do a line of coke off a stripper's tits? Where's little Eddy's lapdance? When's his time damn it?

Little Timmy gets to ride in an F-14. Make a Wish Foundation takes the whole family on a horse-back riding vacation. All this while under the same sky 29 year-old sick little Johnny will pass without every knowing hot, black anal all-gay oral action. And what about little Liza. She's just paralyzed. She's not terminal, she'll just never know an orgasm like you and I do.

Somewhere in a number of different labs across the U.S. there are thousands of embryos that shall never see the light of womb. They will either be destroyed or have their stem cells harvested.

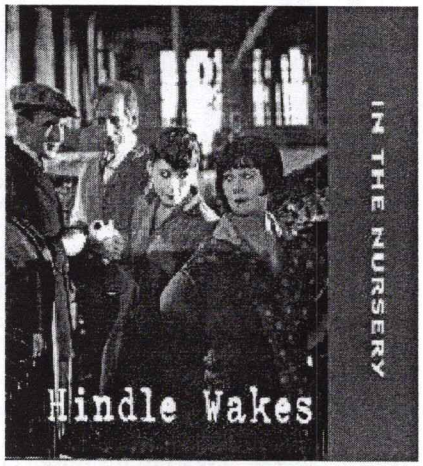
It's a world gone mad. But with stem cells, Little Bobby, may live long enough to enjoy sex, and little Liza may gain feeling from the neck down, allowing her to escape 20 hours a day in the iron lung, and maybe, just maybe,

get her some of that all-girl strap-on anal action she's been dying for.

But then again maybe she'd just be happy being able to hug her mom.

REVIEW: IN THE NURSERY – "HINDLE WAKES"

By Zubrovka



Produced as a soundtrack for the re -release of the 1927 movie, **Hindle Wakes**, (available from BFI video). "**Hindle Wakes** marks the point when the present recedes irretrievably into the past. Shot in 1927 from a 1912 stage play by Stanley Houghton. Controversial in its day, the plot offers standard melodrama with a proto-feminist twist. During the town's annual Wakes Week holiday (a time when "the bond slaves of cotton know the ecstasy of freedom"), the working-class Fanny (Estelle Brody) darts off on an illicit vacation with the mill-owner's playboy son (John Stuart). Cue burlesque eye-rolling from her scandalized mother and a rash of intertitles. The wedding is all arranged. The trouble is that Fanny, (a liberated woman before her time), won't play ball."

GUARDIAN REVIEW: Xan Brooks

In The Nursery (ITN) weaves lush piano and light orchestra into a somewhat downbeat fabric. I feel strains of Debussy in it, along with other Classical composer bits. It's not overpowering at all, but I find it stands well sans the movie, which I have yet to view.

It is very subtle and illusionary and carries the listener along, almost imperceptible; or maybe subtle would be a better explanation. In light of it being created as a soundtrack, I can understand the various turns it makes, never quite all that different, with the exception of a Dixieland dance hall piece (*Ballroom Sweetheart*) that shatters the sound scape and then fades away just as quickly, much like a mild hallucination that leaves you wondering just what it was you saw.

There's just enough non traditional synth in it to keep an interest, working well as it fades in and out. It would make great travel music or to set a calm mood when reading or following one's own creative bent. It is very good.

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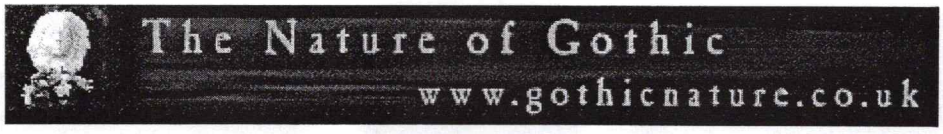
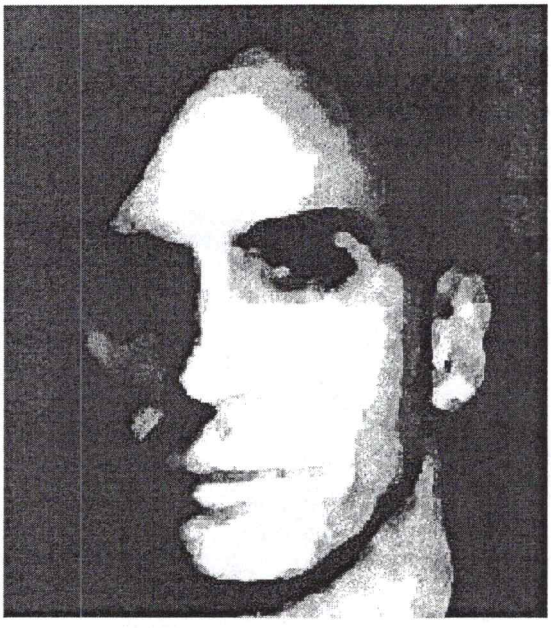


REVIEW: JOHN LUDI – "HELL'S LAUGHTER AND HEAVEN'S ACHE"

By Mike Ventarola



John Ludi, the current name and incarnation of this artist, has been involved in the music world for about 15 years, give or take. His work has appeared under various names such as: John Ludi, Tim Elder, Tim Eldair, and Tim Zukowski. His involvement includes the production of a few bands, owning a couple of labels, creating multiple scores of soundtrack work for independent films and videos, and playing on numerous artist sessions. With all that he has accomplished, he still remains somewhat of an enigma, whose work is slowly worming its way into the hearts, ears and minds of newfound fans worldwide.

All Dead Dictators is perfectly placed at the opening of the CD. The catchy hooks draw you in and the vocals seal your attention. Some have rushed to compare the vocals with Peter Murphy. There is a bit of that element there, but there is also some early Bowie as well. *Progress* starts with a bossa nova feel, but delivers a punch towards the end while delivering impassioned and inspired lyrics over an alternative folk rock-like beat. "So here we are all standing on the brink a bible in one hand, in the other a drink. Into diversion we joyously sink. 'Cause it'll be all right as long as we don't think. Your world is so advanced it doesn't work at all."

Cycles could easily have been an homage to Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young with a modern updating. The initial vocal verses reminded me of a serious Adam Sandler, but then the vocals took on the passion and inflection heard in previous tracks. "Witness the numb youths slouching towards tomorrow with cynical eyes and tattoos by the score, hardwired for oblivion (if it's entertaining). History's seen many like them buried before." *The Complacent Song* has an opening similar in style to *Mandolin Wind* by Rod Stewart. This segues into a soft rock anthem, which states the obvious about the mental state or suburbanites all over. "I'm just another consumer watching Eden turn to hell, so don't ask me to be the one to ask."

Dysfunctional finally puts this sentiment to a musical score with an edgy rock guitar rift. The beauty of this track is one can hear it as a tongue in cheek reflection of one's inner angst, or utilize it as an anthemic purging of one own pity party. *Secret Serenade* is a song of longing. Lyrically, the ruminations center around the object of one's affections that are unattainable. *Hell's Laughter and Heaven's Serenade*, the album title track, has an early punk rock drum kick with a softer layering of music around the song.

Song of Set is a reflective song that could easily slide into top 40 light FM with the right connections. Despite its gentle flow, the lyrics remain poignant and telling of societal ignorance. "He is weary won't you let him go? He is bound here and the earth is his soul. Call it evil and you'll miss the mark, for we are primitives afraid of the dark." *The Clear Light of Day* is another relatively soft alternative rock track with telling lyrics. In the space of a paragraph, it is impossible to provide justice for the intensity behind the words, thus one is encourage to read this bit of beautiful poetry in its entirety at the artist's web site.

A Late Night Argument With God highlights the frustration that many feel when faced with their approach and dialogue with the Creator. This is an angry plea for answers to that which we are conditioned to revere, but never seem to receive any answers from. *Kali Yuga* thunders home to drive the points taken in the earlier tracks. Musically, there is a Goth/Pink Floyd connection going on.

The initial disappointment that this was not a gothic recording was immediately replaced by respect for Ludi's talent. Considering that this is a one man recording, with some backing vocal assistance from Jodie J., **Hell's Laughter and Heaven's Ache** ranks as one of the best self-released, self-created CD's to cross this desk in quite some time. I will go out on a limb to state that had David Bowie recorded these songs, the CD would have gone multi-platinum by now and quite frankly, he would probably kill to get his hands on these tunes if he knew they existed.

Bowie's loss is our treasure, simply because we are able to obtain this remarkable work at a fraction of the cost that major labels charge. Ludi is a poet, priest, anarchist and peace-monger. Contradictory as that may seem, much of his inner mind is wrapped in the intelligent lyrics and impassioned pleas that demarcate the recording, delivering many of us from the glut of banality often seen in the music world. The catchy hooks are merely sugar coating on lyrics that pose questions and ideations long buried in our slumbering psyches.

The work does include drum machines, however, in light of all the Synthpop that has been breaking new ground in clubs all over the globe, this no longer detracts from the work as some earlier reviewers have remarked. Instead, Ludi demonstrated that, like Bowie, he is ahead of his time. This current CD is positioned for massive consumption, as his time has arrived. Ludi may shudder at this, as he disdains commercialism, however the work is up to the minute at this point and deserves all the accolades it receives.

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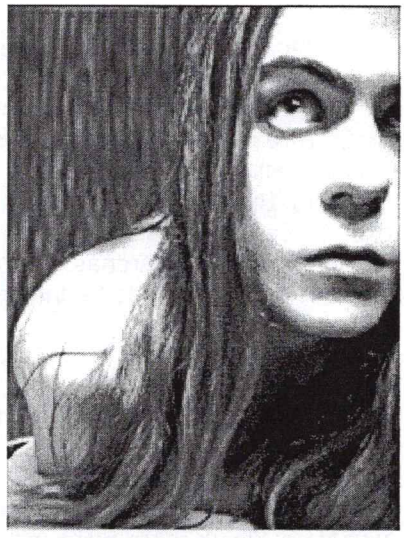
INTERVIEW: CHRISTOPHER

By Azriel J. Knight



Azriel: Lets start off with an easy one, how did your music career begin?

Christopher: It began like many others: In my adolescence trying to find a way to get girls.

A: Just for all the tech-ies out there what do you use to produce your music?

C: Techies would be disappointed by my answer. Everything I did to produce this record would be deemed wrong and a travesty to audio engineers around the world. No compressors, no noise gates, just a cheap $100 microphone and lots of imagination. I did use various audio software to lay the tracks down courtesy of some generous friends of mine. I was too poor at the time to acquire the basic needs for a studio. I couldn't let that stop me from doing the "wer Next Projekt." I did a lot of improvising.

A: Some might be impressed by that though, to break from the norm, and to improvise, just say "fuck it" and wing it. Tell me more about the "Wer Next Project," starting with why it's under that title.

C: The title came to me in a dream. I don't know the significance. I do know that depending on the pronunciation of `wer Next' you could be asking a question or an answer. So I guess I can conclude what "wer Next Projekt" means: It's a question that answers itself.

A: The album seems to have some worldy cultural influences, a lot of chanting. Tell me about it.

C: I don't know why there is a `worldly' feel to the music. I honestly don't get that feeling. I will concede there is a lot of exotic instrumentation and I sing in a `non-western' way. I didn't think about what instruments I was going to use or how I was going to sing. It just happened that way, and I felt, at the end, the album goes for your throat. I don't remember actually doing much of the record, every time tracks were laid down I was in a trance or a zone of some sort. Something within me, or maybe even outside of me, drove this record to completion. A lot of fucked up emotions, weird occurrences, blood loss (literally) and a nervous breakdown all contributed to the creation of 'wer Next'.

A: *Nokturne*, the first song on your album, does make more sense now after you explain that. Tell me more about that song specifically though, I mean, the bloody thing is nearly 18 minutes long, but it's so well done.

C: Thanks. *Nokturne* is based on a 15th century piece called *Come Heavy Sleep* written by John Dowland, and a piece by Benjamin Britten called *Nocturnal* (for John Dowland) which is based around the themes of *Come Heavy Sleep*. *Nokturne* combines both of those songs together and I added my interpretations of both pieces. As for the length, it just happened

to end up like that. I don't take most people's short attention spans into consideration. If it works at 17 minutes, let it be 17 minutes.

A: And you do all the singing on the album?

C: 90% of the singing is me. With the exception of a sample here and there because they were more appropriate to use than my voice.

A: At a part in *Nokturne* a woman speaks. Where did you get it from and what did she say?

C: The woman speaks in Portuguese. It is from the movie *Black Orpheus.* a beautiful Bbrazilian film. As for what she says, rent the movie, it's a wonderful piece of non-American cinema.

A: Delving into the more personal so people have a better idea of where your coming from lets dip into something strange, am I right in saying you once blacked out and woke up in the country where you couldn't speak the language?

C: Oh that, well, there was a time in my life just before the recording of my record I had this penchance for `medicating' myself quite a bit. And I medicated myself a little too much one day and ended up calling a travel agent (which I can't remember) and ended up in Spain for a day. I guess my senses recovered upon landing in Madrid and realized my precarious position. I was bummed, I went over at a time when they weren't running with the bulls.

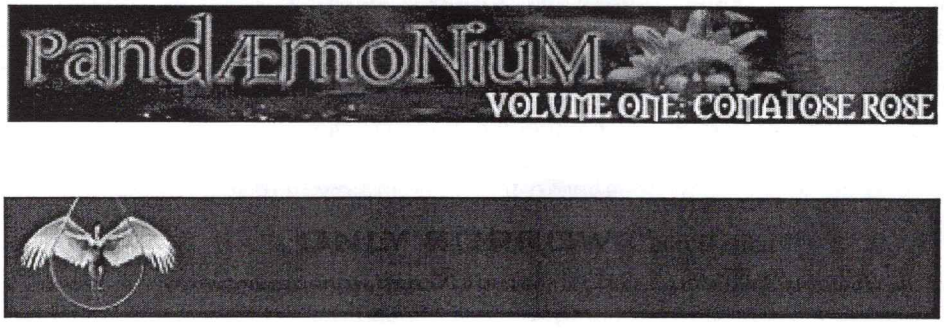
A: Well that's a story if I have ever heard one. Tell me about "live" Christopher.

C: Live is going to be a really intense experience. I'm assembling a group as we speak. It's going to be a 8-10 person group (I really don't want to use samplers unless I have to) with tons of laser lights and hopefully use video screens. I'm working with a lighting designer right now and throwing around some ideas with various young and starving would-be directors. But despite all the lasers, smoke, imagery and maybe an exploding stripper or 2, the focus is on making the live experience as intimate as possible. The music is really most effective when heard by one person at a time. The music is not for stadiums or arenas. It's really just for...you and only you. So it should prove interesting what happens when this music is heard on stage for the first time.

A: What are the other future plans for Christopher?

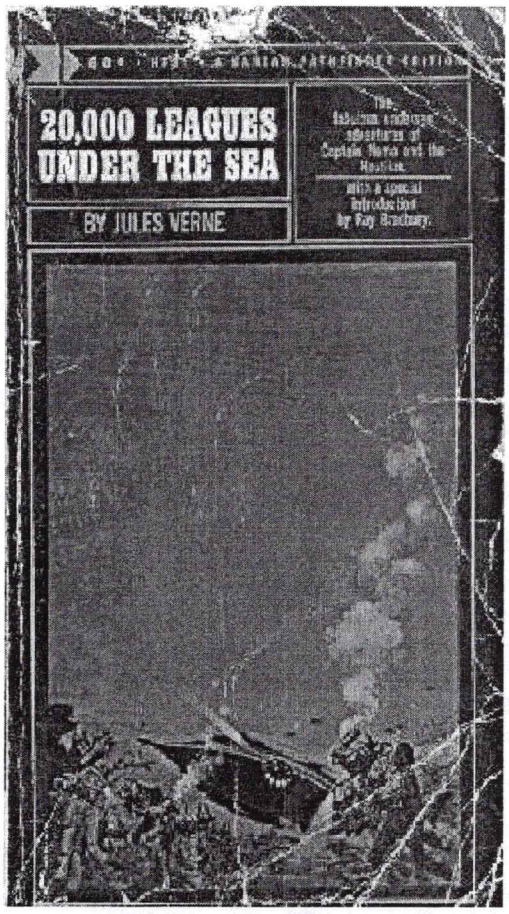
C: Some people can plan years ahead of themselves. I learned from myself that I can't plan on anything really concrete. All I know is that there is a goal: To be heard by many regardless of where you come from, your color, your sex, or what scene you may be into. My biggest obsession along with music is people's distorted views on beauty. It disturbs me how we are driven by the media to have a washboard stomach and fit into a size 4 dress (I'm lucky if I can fit into plus sizes). 'wer Next' I think really fucks with the concept of beauty at times: Taking what you think is beautiful and cutting up its face and then taking what you deem as ugly and making it angelic. The worst thing anyone can do is use their physical appearance by making it a weapon of `have and have not.' Models look freakish and revolting. I wouldn't cry if the day came when they finally vomit up their vital organs rather than the Macdonald's they wolfed down 20 minutes previous.

Reprinted from Pandaemonium (www.pandaemon.cjb.net)
Christopher (http://www.comecloser.com, http:// www.mp3.com/christopherx)



Off The Shelf
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

By Marcus Pan



Verne was a master of his work, bringing the art of science fiction back to the natural world around us. While others were off exploring the ever-present outer space, alien cultures, evolution, time travel and things like this, Verne stayed home. From his hand spun classic tales, some brought to the silver screen. But all of them remained steeped in the natural world rather than gallivanting about "out there."

Verne's strength was his research and fact gathering. He spent huge amounts of time studying the smallest details concerning the landscape and places that his next novel was going to go. Within *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* you are reading from the viewpoint of Monsieur Pierre Aronnax, a naturalist who not only found himself fascinated by the wonders of the ocean, he wrote a book about it. And therefore Verne's prime character had to be well-read and knowledgeable, and therefore the writer did as well.

Ships and steamers of the civilized countries of the world find themselves terrified by a huge beast that has the ability to puncture throw the bellies of their ships. On a search and destroy mission, the Abraham Lincoln loses three companions from its decks and these men; Aronnax, Conseil and harpooner Ned Land; find themselves on a submarine, not a beast as was originally thought. Unfortunately the ship's captain, Nemo, is rather mad – even if he is a genius (most geniuses are, they say). What follows is the adventure of these men on Nemo's ship, the Nautilus, the first high-depth submarine of its kind in a time when they haven't been built yet.

Nemo takes Aronax by hand to show him some of the wonders beneath the sea. The adventures are quite riveting, from reaching the South Pole by way of sailing beneath the great ice barrier and getting trapped inside walls of ice on the way out. A battle with giant squids off the coast of the Bahamas, underwater hunting expeditions in the forests off Crespo Island and many more. Throughout the novel however there is the nagging question of where Nemo comes from and why did he sever ties with mankind to make the ocean his home? You're given hints, clues and a glimpse into his madness culminating in a battle at sea, but you never do find out the full story.

A downside to the novel is it isn't quite as swift as some would like. Verne uses his research to great aplomb throughout the book, lauding the reader with details on underwater life and creatures. While I applaud his efforts at fact checking, research and using it all, I must say that slogging through pages of natural science can get tedious. Especially when Aronnax's associate, Conseil, gets involved. Conseil is a master at classification, so you are filled with information regarding what family and what genus, subspecies, etc. this particular fish belongs to, peppered with Aronnax's knowledge of the life cycles and Ned Land knowing whether or not they're yummy. So there will be parts of the novel that will just simply drag; unless of course you're studying marine biology on the side.

But of course, *20,000 Leagues* is nonetheless an excellent novel. It is a classic and always will be, and shows us that science fiction can be just as exciting when you're still standing on Earth.

"20,000 Leagues Under the Sea" by Jules Verne
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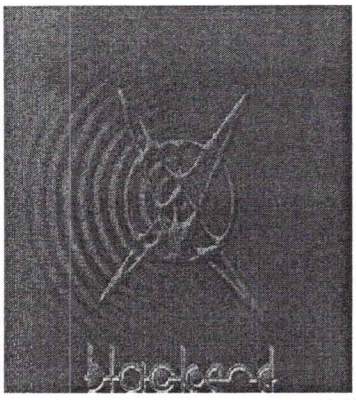
REVIEW: V/A – "BLACKEND"

By Marcus Pan



Non-sleeping Florida local Bob Menedez isn't one to rest on his laurels. Releasing his project, Doomsdaykult, and bringing us The Complete DDK[1] recently, he has since put together a small label outfit bearing the name Rivithead Records. Contrary to what the label's promised music may sound like, and while they intend on poking their heads into the industrial and heavier genres indeed such as the recent signing of Philly's Genetic Mishap and release of their follow-up **D-Evolution** CD, Rivithead is also touching upon some more techno-laden, DJ-style and even trance on their double CD **Blackend** release; Rivithead Record's first release out the door.

Blackend consists of a total of 18 tracks, 9 on each CD. While one could imagine them fitting all 18 onto one CD, you can see the division as the second CD tends to get a bit more chill-out and trancy while the first explores a more goth/industrial bent. There's a lot of unknown artists here with respectable tracks. While Doomsdaykult and Genetic Mishap both appear as is expected, the rest are virtual unknowns pushing out some decent tracks, all of them vying for plays and downloads on MP3.com. The CD is presented well, and while the **Blackend** compilation isn't set to be a highlight of this year's releases, it is assuredly a gem in the rough and because of its explorations across electronic music styles most will be programming their own playlists for this one to find what they believe to be the diamonds of the collection.

Disc 1

DoomsdayKult - *Dance of the Dead*
Bob Melendez's project, it's only natural that he kicks of his new label's compilation showing us what he can do himself. Immediately kicking off **Blackend** with a decidedly techno slamming beat. Heavily bass-centric, *Dance of the Dead* is a good setup and collection opener, starting it off with power, speed and balls.

Genetic Mishap – *Borg Nine*
For more on Pittsburg's Genetic Mishap, see the recent reviews of their **Pre-NA** and **D-Evolution** CDs, the latter of which is Rivithead's release as well. Having mixed feelings about GM's work, as their music tends toward extremely experimental, I can say that *Borg Nine* is easily one of their better tracks.

Lefkin Encoded – *Audio Field*
A brooding, windy track with an EBM smell and industrial taste, *Audio Field* is one of **Blackend**'s highlights. Standard fare yet well placed guitar work surrounding by bell-like synthetic overtones.

If/Then – *Breath*
Taking Lefkin's broodiness and drowning it in bass and string-like melodies, If/Then spit angst like a pissed cobra. The vocals are superb, if a little too far under the melodic synth tones at times. Male and female vocalists trade off on each other's work, at some points together yet at others spinning off on their own tangents. If only the vocals were given a bit more priority in the mastering I'd enjoy this track more.

Hideous Input – *I Am Not Alive*
With a wonderful synthpop flair, Hideous Input save the moodiness that was building since Lefkin and inject it with bright melodies and windy vocals. Surely a highlight to **Blackend**, *I Am Alive* is an excellent old skool synthpop sound that adds layers of trance texture on it to create a bittersweet morsel of sound.

Two Ton Flood – *Second Skin*
Slipping from the comfy surrounding tones of *I Am Alive*, Two Ton Flood's contribution to this collection takes us a bit further into industrial while keeping the brighter-melody tone to the track. A smooth introduction drops into a rhythm-centric EBM tune. The lyrics are a bit banal, but it is packaged so well you hardly notice.

La Morte – *The Crucification of God*
You simply can't put out a compilation like this if you don't have something nasty to say about the omnipotent God of organized religion(s). La Morte immediately dump you into a true bass-laden, vox-stymied track that reminds you that this label is called Rivethead, goddamn it, and don't you fucking forget that!

Speorg – *Together We Will Rot*
Keeping the cyberpunks happy, Speorg contributes what I feel is THE highlight track of all the compilation. Powerful, techno-laden with synth-work galore, *Together We Will Rot* is an in-yo-face industrial stomp that gets under your skin and moves you regardless of how many layers of crustiness you might wear.

[1] Reviewed in Legends #108.

DoomsdayKult – *The Machine*
A bit repetitive and not too creative, *The Machine* is a good name for this track as it shows levels of control and non-deviation. As Bob opened disc 1 with a stomp, he closes it with similar.

Disc 2

Translucent – *Blade Song*
A big surprise awaits you as you go to the second disc of the compilation. Completely switching gears on you, *Blade Song* by Translucent opens like an ethereal piece with strong, male vocals and decently enough arranged string sounds. A very strong bass line drones the track causing it a small amount of dragging. Guitars visit only occasionally, highlighting chorus areas.

Nokturnal Bliss – *Biomachine*
Now we step into DJ style, with the raver-flare *Biomachine*. Concentrating on a drum 'n bass style, *Biomachine* may be a little repetitive in sound, but clearly shows that Nokturnal Bliss know how to control a rhythm while mixing it up with changes and samples.

Thirty Below – *Build*
Keeping it rhythmic, *Build* is a track that has a swift and moving beat. It is clearly a trance song and quite a good one, though it's nothing too new. Just a good example of good trance.

Reshure – *A Trip Through the Years*
Slowing it down and sending you straight from the trance-induced clouds to a mire of moodiness and despair, Reshure's *Trip Through the Years* is a welcome chill out, but set this track on your playlists to close the night because it's surely going to put a damper on your X. The piano melody gives you the same type of chills as when you walk into a gothic church to hear Quasimodo playing the pipe organs.

Antioxidant – *Drift*
Once again we slide into a faster-beat trance track with *Drift*. More of a DJ mix, *Drift* will occasionally switch up on you, suspend beats, change rhythms and try to completely denigrate your expectations. For ravers this is a must-have, sure to keep the floor moving. A highlight to this side of the compilation.

Sanitary Refuse – *Jaded*
Opening with simplistic beats and moving into complete junkyard bangs, *Jaded* is definitely a rhythmic extravaganza. It will stop suddenly, tell you how much of a failure you are (via sample) and then step back into the heavy-hitting barrage of part experimental industrial, part drum 'n bass nightmare.

187 Trance – *Inspectors Nitemare*
Ok, how the fuck did this one slip on here? Now I have been known to spin some MP3.com trance, 187 Trance included (303 Infinity and Bondi Drive being two MP3.com trance favorites off the top of my head), and while *Inspectors Nightmare* is surely a decent progressive trance tune, this particular overplayed, overhyped, overheard melody does NOT belong on a Rivethead compilation. Case in point – my ten year old loves it. Need I say more?

Distorted Electronic Idol – *Distonic Electroil Ided*
Experimental and heavy-handed, *Distonic Electroil Ided* sounds more like one that belongs on the first CD and not between these two. It's a bit more chaotic than I like for my own listening pleasure, a bit banal in makeup and melody, but the chorus rocks.

Out After – *Future's Past*
A wonderful trip to close **Blackend** to. *Future's Past* is a good track name. The bubbly synth score drags time longer while the swift rhythm fights the drag and attempts a pull forward making for a pleasant and uncanny track. The Arabian style mixed up vocal samples are a tasty icing on the cake. A powerful arrangement here.

Like I said, you will undoubtedly program your own playlists to this compilation; seeking out the shiny tracks from the ones you don't like as much. With a two-CD exploration of electronica, running the gamut from industrial to synthpop, EBM to trance, drum 'n bass to experimental; nobody is really going to love everything here. That's not what it's meant for. But you will find your own diamonds as **Blackend** is a well put together compilation, with the darker tinged stuff on disc 1 and the trancier, more upbeat tempos on disc 2. Even going so far as to break rules and actually use the forsaken word "trance" on the compilation, new FL outfit Rivithead Records steps out of the gate with an impressive start.

Contact Information:
Web: http://doomzdaykult.tripod.com/rivitheadrecords/

Laughing Eyes

By Sue Simpson

The office was so hot that morning. Libby sat at her monitor gazing wistfully out of the window at the park over the road. Why did the management insist on having the damned central heating on so high? It wasn't a particularly nice day so it would be quiet and cool in the park at lunchtime. Maybe the odd jogger or old man walking his dog, but not much else in the way of humanity. It was her custom to take sandwiches and a bottle of diet coke to the park every lunchtime and on days when the weather refused to permit it, she would return from her lunch break out of sorts and feeling unrefreshed.

Her bench was empty. Sometimes she didn't mind if there was someone already there, she had met some really nice people on that wooden seat. Today though she was glad to have a little bit of peace and quiet. This was her favourite part of the day; she could just sit and watch the world go rushing past her. An hour of life speculating rather than life competing.

As she drew level with the bench and sat down she realised that it wasn't quite as empty as she at first thought. Somebody had left something. It was a parcel about a foot square wrapped in brown paper. Libby stood and looked all around her to see if she could see anybody leaving the park. It might belong to them and she could do her good deed for the day in returning it. Right over at the far side of the park a keeper tended the greens, the faint whirring of his motorised lawn mower soothed her like the loud ticking of a comforting clock. Other than the gardener she seemed to have the park, or as much as she could see of it, to herself.

She picked the parcel up and vague ruminatings of "What if it's a bomb?" passed through her mind. She almost laughed aloud at herself. The family always said that she was a cast in the dye drama queen. This was sleepy little Penton and bomb wielding terrorists didn't seem to frequent the park very often.

The brown paper parcel was labelled 'To the lady with the laughing eyes.' Libby went into instant Nancy Drew mode. "Hmm its obviously a gift to a lady from her admirer. Too big to be an engagement ring, unless he aimed to disguise the fact, and anyway the label would suggest that he doesn't know her very well. Or maybe that is his pet name for her. But then wouldn't it be labelled to **my** lady with the laughing eyes?" Libby was enjoying herself; she put the parcel down on the bench beside her and unwrapped her egg mayonnaise baguette. As she continued to ponder about the parcel, its contents and more importantly its owner, she munched contentedly. "Too big to be chocolates, unless he wanted her to be as big as the side of a house. And assuming she wasn't fond of cast iron panties then it was too heavy for lingerie. "I know," she thought, "I bet it's a beautiful hand crafted glass ornament, one of those with the crystals inserted into it somewhere. Hell, it must have been expensive to be that size, the prices for those start at a small house mortgage for just a tiny one." Totally convinced now of the contents of the brown paper package, Libby worried that she might have damaged the fine glassware in her examination of the parcel. "No it's alright, he's obviously a very meticulous man." The parcel was wrapped to perfection. All the corners and edges carefully tucked away and the paper smooth and creaseless. He would have taken equal care in packing it firmly so that no damage could befall it.

Her sandwich was almost finished by the time she came to the burning question that she **had** to work out an answer to. "So why did they leave without the present? Maybe she stood him up and he stalked off in disgust leaving the parcel for whoever was lucky enough to find it." This last idea held a note of hope in her mind's voice. "No." she had to grudgingly admit. "He wouldn't spend all that money just to walk away and leave it. Maybe they had a huge argument and she ran off in tears. He of course being the gallant gentleman that he is, went after her completely forgetting about the parcel. Hmm more likely than the last idea, but he would have returned for it as soon as she had handed him back his white handkerchief, now of course slightly the worse for wear and a bit snotty." No that didn't work either … There was one other possibility that did make perfect sense…

Libby felt slightly embarrassed even thinking this. It was absurd, she couldn't possibly be right. But it was the only explanation so it must be. She came to the same bench, in the same park, at the same time, every day that the weather would allow. What if she had a secret admirer? Daft as it sounds, that must be it. Someone had been watching her come to the park every day and had admired her from afar. Well maybe no that far if he could see her eyes. She didn't know about 'laughing' eyes but she had often been told in the past that she had attractive eyes. And once some jerk that fancied himself as the next poet laureate had told her that, she had eyes that would shame the depths of the deepest sea into drowning itself as a failure.

Now that she knew the parcel was meant for her, for she had talked herself quite firmly into the fact that it was, she was pink with excitement. She couldn't wait to open it. "But not here." She told herself she would just have to contain her impatience until she got home that evening.

The afternoon had been a nightmare. Twice she had been told off by her boss for day dreaming when the phone was ringing. The need to tell someone of her secret parcel had been almost unbearable. The need to tell *Karen,* her best mate, played on her mind all afternoon. And yet something held her back. Perhaps it was the fact that if she was wrong about the parcel then she would feel stupid and Kaz would never let her live it down that she had thought the gift was for her. Or maybe it was deeper than that. Where Libby was flighty and sometimes a bit airheaded, Karen was always down to earth and sensible. Libby knew that Kaz would not see this as something wonderful and romantic. At best she would see it as sleazy and sinister and at worst she would have Libby marched down to the police station to hand the parcel in before she could say, "Brown paper packages tied up with string." So Libby said nothing and somehow got through the afternoon shift without bursting from curiosity.

Once through the front door, Libby put the parcel down on the kitchen work-top. She had waited all day to open it and now that the moment had arrived she felt a little bit nervous, like a virgin bride at bedtime. She made a cup of coffee while the parcel seemed to scream at her "Open me, open me." This could be the defining moment of her future, she wanted it to be perfect. "To the lady with the laughing eyes." How romantic.

"Well this is it girl, you have forfeited the right to answer a question and its time to **open the box.**" She took parcel and coffee through to the living room and made herself comfortable on the sofa. With the parcel on her knee and with slightly trembling hands she undid the packaging.

Inside was a red box. The type of gift box you buy from extortionately priced card shops. The box was bright metallic red with a glittery effect and made of sturdy cardboard with a fitted lid. The lid was firmly celllotaped to the box and on the top was a large lavender envelope that read, "Important please **do not** open the box until you have read the contents of this envelope."

Sweet words of love from her admirer perhaps. Libby tore the envelope open and took from inside it several sheets of matching paper. She unfolded them and began reading the small, neat handwriting.

My dear Lady.

I begin this missal with an apology. Whatever trouble or hardship you have in your life, believe me, it is nothing to what I am about to lay upon you. With the exception of one other thing, I am more sorry for this, than for anything I have ever done in my life to date. I give you my sincere apology from the bottom of my heart, but I need not ask you to understand my reasons because you will come to understand them for yourself only too soon.

I begin with a story of explanation; please good lady bear with me while I tell my tale, let not impatience overcome you. I give you a choice to walk away, but if you precede the writings then the choice will be taken from you and you will be the keeper against your choosing.

Centuries ago in ancient Egypt there was a queen that nobody acknowledges. Her rein was but a short one and her crimes against humanity so heinous that she was struck from the history books of the country. The government of the day decreed that her name and reputation die with her and that she would never be mentioned after her tomb was sealed forever.

Her political crimes are not relevant to me, nor indeed to you, what we are concerned with is the harm that she did her own daughter.

In Egypt the nation are blessed with slightly almond shaped eyes that are a rich dark brown and are accentuated by long black lashes. The evil queen had born to her a daughter with sapphire blue eyes. As the child grew instead of changing hue the child's eyes only intensified in brilliance. She developed a great and outstanding beauty. Her eyes became more piercingly blue by the year. Yet her looks were tempered with a kind spirit and gentle soul. Anyone who came into contact with the little princess was a slave to her bidding because of her beauty and kindness. The little one's mother, already embittered by a blackened heart, grew jealous of her little girl. She knew not how to love, but her ability for sending out waves of hatred was surpassed by none. Soon her hatred turned upon her only child.

It was in the little girl's eighth year when she was taken from her bed at night and dragged into the dessert. She was strapped between two sacrificial pillars and left to the mercy of the night. Her mother rode away from the child without a backward glance.

It was some weeks before Sapphire was found by a band of nomad gypsies. Her eyes were missing when they cut her down and the nomads assumed that they had been taken by dessert carrion. Indeed they had, but not of the kind they meant. Before she left her child to die the evil queen took her daughter's eyes from their sockets so that God would not gaze upon their beauty and save the child from death.

The queen kept the eyes, unable to part with them. It's said she was driven out of her mind because the eyes' focus followed her around the room. No matter where they were the pupils were directed on the evil queen's face. She tried to get rid of them of course. They were burned, taken to the sea and cast, weighted from a boat. She even tried smashing the ornate jar that housed the eyes. The vessel had taken on the strength of God and could not be smashed. No matter what the queen did to rid herself of her daughter's eyes, the following morning they would be back in position beside her. Looking, ever looking, never wavering in their accusing stare. The queen was driven mad.

After her death the jar was sealed in her gilded tomb with her. The next morning they appeared on the table beside her sister's bed. The queen's sister was not a bad person; she was innocent of any crimes against humanity, and of any crime against her niece. She had tried to make the queen see sense where the little girl was concerned and loved her as any aunt would, and yet still the child's curse passed to the queen's sister.

And so my dear it has passed indiscriminately from year to year, country to country, woman to woman.

For my own part I became the keeper of Sapphire's eyes some years ago. I was a taxi driver and the parcel was left on the back seat of my taxi. I made my choice, as you will make your choice. You see the curse is never forced upon you, Each and every one of us makes the choice to take on the responsibility.

So, my friend upon whom I have no axe to grind. I have reached the time when I can pass the eyes of Sapphire on to someone else. Because you have already taken the package and opened this far, you are the chosen. At this point you have two choices. You can package up the parcel and return it to the bench where you found it in which case any responsibility will be lifted from your shoulders … or you can open the box to see if this is all some sick hoax. If you return the box unopened to the park then it will be returned to me, as it always has been when I have tried to rid myself of the burden. If you open the box know that from that moment on you will be the keeper for one generation. Twenty years is a long time to shoulder the responsibility my dear. Think hard before you go any further.

I am going to go now and hope that when I awake in the morning the Jar is not on its usual shelf in my bedroom. Before I do I feel I owe it to you to explain a little of what life will be like for you from this day forward.

You may think that you have other choices. But you do not. You came upon the parcel by chance. Every woman alive has laughing eyes sometimes. Every woman except the keeper. The eyes not only have an instinct for self-preservation they have their own warped little sense of humour. I could not advise that you go to the police with this, or even tell anyone about it. You will never be believed. Sapphire's spirit suffered along with her body as she hung between those pillars. Her sweet nature dried in the shimmering dessert heat and now the spirit that resides within the floating eyes bears no woman any mercy.

For instance, how do I know that it is a woman who found the parcel? If you had been a man, or a child, or had not been alone you would have failed to notice the box on the seat beside you. For it would not have been there. I have already explained that the jar can not be lost, damaged, or done-away with. If you show the jar to any other person all they will see is a jar filled with water. If you pass on the curse out of spite or hatred to someone who has wronged you, then the jar will be returned to you. The jar can be covered, I use a piece of heavy velvet, but it makes no difference because you know that the eyes are beside you always. That they are watching you always. That they are there…always. Sometimes in the night, when all around you is quiet, you hear them. They move in the jar and as the fluid is displaced it splashes softly beside you. When you make love you feel them watching you, the mere scrap of material between you and them is of no consequence, you know that they see everything you do. You will never be alone again. Whichever room of whichever house you are in, they are there with you.

Soon you become weary of looking in your bag and finding them there lurking at the bottom. You get sick of looking up from the bath and seeing them on the towel shelf. You become resigned to the fact that they are your nemesis. Eventually I built a small shelf in each room of my house. They know their place and seem happy to be there. You will find that they like to be involved in your life. They like being spoken to.

I have not yet dared write of the most horrible thing of all. Soon you will have no body in your life. Soon you will be alone. And then one day you wake-up and realise that they are probably the only friend you have. You form an attachment to them. They are your only companion. Parting with them will be hard. We have been together for so long now. But you see I realise that I am not getting any younger. If I am to have any life at all I ***must*** *do this. Not wanting to part with them is the greatest horror of all.*

I am weary now friend. I feel there is nothing more I can tell you. I have done as I felt duty bound to do and informed you of the choice you have to make. Go in peace with God my friend because soon even he will not be able to save you.

Not surprisingly the letter was unsigned.

Libby was trembling. My God there were some sick bastards about. She had heard about these chain letters that passed between gullible and foolish people. This was a new one on her though. The instigator had a vivid imagination, that's for sure. Well Libby wasn't about to fall for any of the Egyptian curse mumbo-jumbo. She had never heard of such rubbish. She was shaking from head to toe not through fear, but through anger. She was going to take this straight down to the police station. For a second or two she thought about opening the box first to see if there was a demand for money to rescue her from the curse of Sapphire's eyes or something similar, but decided that she may have already ruined vital evidence by opening the outer packaging. No, better to let the police deal with it. She was curious to see what the sick arseholes had put in the box, possibly some sheep's eyeballs or something equally disgusting. Well she wasn't about to be sucked in to their evil sickness.

She scooped up everything that came with the package and stuffed it into a carrier bag. Her temper had done little to subside by the time she faced a very young, bored looking police constable at the reception desk of the local police station.

Libby rambled for some minutes about eyes and jars and curses, and then triumphantly opened the carrier bag to produce the evidence to support her wild accusations of pyramid chain parcels and a gang of blackmailers who were preying on the innocent public and lone women in particular.

The carrier bag contained a box of breakfast cereal and two old newspapers. From the minute she had put the parcel in the carrier bag to the second she looked inside it at the police station the bag had never been off her arm. There had been no opportunity for anyone to tamper with the bag. Libby blustered and said that someone must have swapped bags on her. She was very lucky that the policeman didn't have her sectioned under the mental health act. All she received was a stern lecture about wasting police time. The condescending git suggested she go home and 'make it up' with her boyfriend. Libby left the station embarrassed and seething in equal proportions.

When she got home the brown paper was back on the sofa where it had been unwrapped earlier, but the box was sitting in the middle of the dining room table. Although the door had been securely locked and nobody could possibly have broken in during her absence, Libby was convinced that someone was playing a sick joke on her for financial gain. At least she assumed it was financially motivated.

By this time her temper had way surpassed a simmering seethe; it had left boiling point far behind. Libby was beyond care or reason. No-bastard-body was going to frighten or intimidate her in her own home.

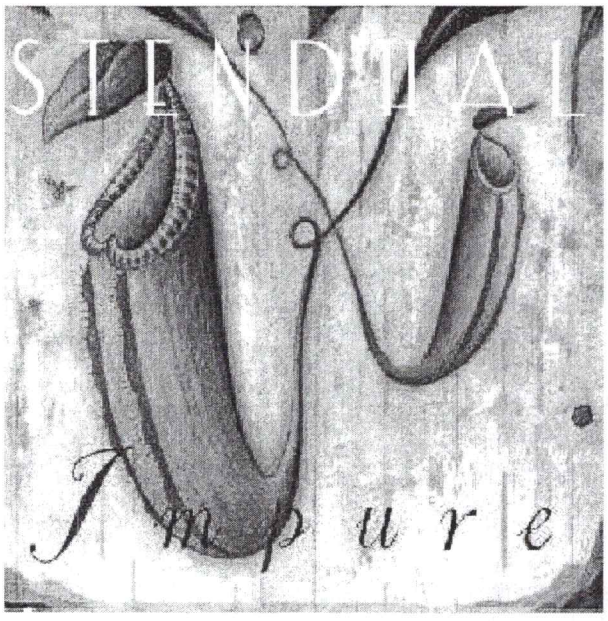
"You think I'm scared huh?" she yelled aloud turning around to shout in a circle. "I'll show you how scared I am of your pathetic little hoax."

She picked up the pretty box and tore furiously into the cellotape holding it closed. A jar was firmly held in place with polystyrene and tissue paper. She reached in and removed the jar from its holdings.

And then as any laughter left her eyes forever, she screamed for a very long time.

REVIEW: STENDHAL – "IMPURE"

By Mike Ventarola



Stendhal's CD **Impure** could have easily been subtitled "Dare" simply because that is what they did. This four-piece outfit didn't strive to create a formulaic album with pretty choruses and glittering lyrics. Instead, they defiled every inanimate object known to man, and like the Blue Man Group, created order from the chaos. They utilized no synthesizers, samplers or digital manipulation of any kind but rather enmeshed the sound of guitar and bass that were put through the rigors of banging and bowing and wove them through a strange cacophony that included everything from metal detectors, oscillators, televisions, and scrap metal.

The Boat Song darkly opens like some ill-fated ship lost at sea. The noise effects give rise to an eerie soundtrack quality. Guitars are abused to reach the right note within the parameters of disorder. *4th Passenger* tends to have an alien quality to it. The song embraces the future with its stark sounds, catchy off beat rhythm and midnight quality vocals. Think Gary Numan meets Bauhaus. *Double Image* delves into a more goth rock friendly style song, clearly demonstrating that this band is quite capable of creating club friendly songs if they had to. In the break, we ar0e once again treated to a sonic world that this band hears and interprets. Even if one is not too keen on avant-garde expression of sound, one cannot help but be amazed at how well this band expertly layers each tone.

Third Person Singular almost segues from the last song with guitar licks that are a tribute to every underground band that has come before them. This track harkens back to the early stages when punk was evolving into goth. *Every Night* takes a recorded voice and white noise and places it within the parameters of a heartbeat style rhythm. The lyrics are sung over this in an odd mix that resonates with the emphasis of the forlorn. *Tundale* veers again into the realm of early punk/goth with added background bonuses that one is hard pressed to identify. This is a haunted track full of kinetic energy.

Lucky 7 seems to emanate with an Asian influence with the way the intro portion of the song utilizes what sounds like cans and bottles, each clanged with a tonal intent that works well. *Legend Song* segues from the previous track with militaristic beats and guitar chords that are from the school of early Bauhaus and the Joy Division. The song leaps from the CD, almost demanding to be considered a classic, which it certainly deserves to be. *Lord Dufferin* starts a shoegazer style track that opens with 2 guitars and a drum, metronomically keeping time with the vocals, which then segues with tougher sounds to coalesce into a dark rock track.

The Girl With The Purple Face brings us into a mild reverie with sounds that are also backward masked at the opening. This track also works as one that would be club friendly to some extent because it pulsates with great energy between the somber moments. *My Life To Live* opens a haunted style piano instrumental that seems to have been recorded from a timeless past. Dialogue samples are layered under the music, indistinct, but adding to the element of mental reflection. Once again, the band utilizes sound to reflect the pervasiveness of technology replacing our memories and emotions.

Had Stendhal only created an album full of cacophony, their talent would have been highly suspect. However, they defied the laws of music by utilizing objects to create tones that work harmoniously in their songs. Much of this work is reflective

of the early punk/goth transition, yet with the added machinations of objects that were never meant to be used as part of a music venue, they clearly brought the underground world full circle.

In a world where every 20 years everything old is new again, Stendhal pays great homage and does justice to the early roots of the punk/goth hybrid era. That is not to say that this is an album steeped in merely borrowed elements of that period. Instead, they have taken all that was great about that time, added some expert touches, utilized additional sound effects and handed us what could be a glorious future for the underground musical movement.

Stendhal demonstrated that a band does not need fancy gadgets to create something new and innovative. They took sound from the world around them, or tweaked it out of objects for the desired results, culminating in an album that is well done, thought provoking and entertaining. The work may not be to everyone's taste due to the somewhat experimental nature that is woven within the songs. However, fans of early underground work as well as "noise" fans, will find that it is a refreshing album.

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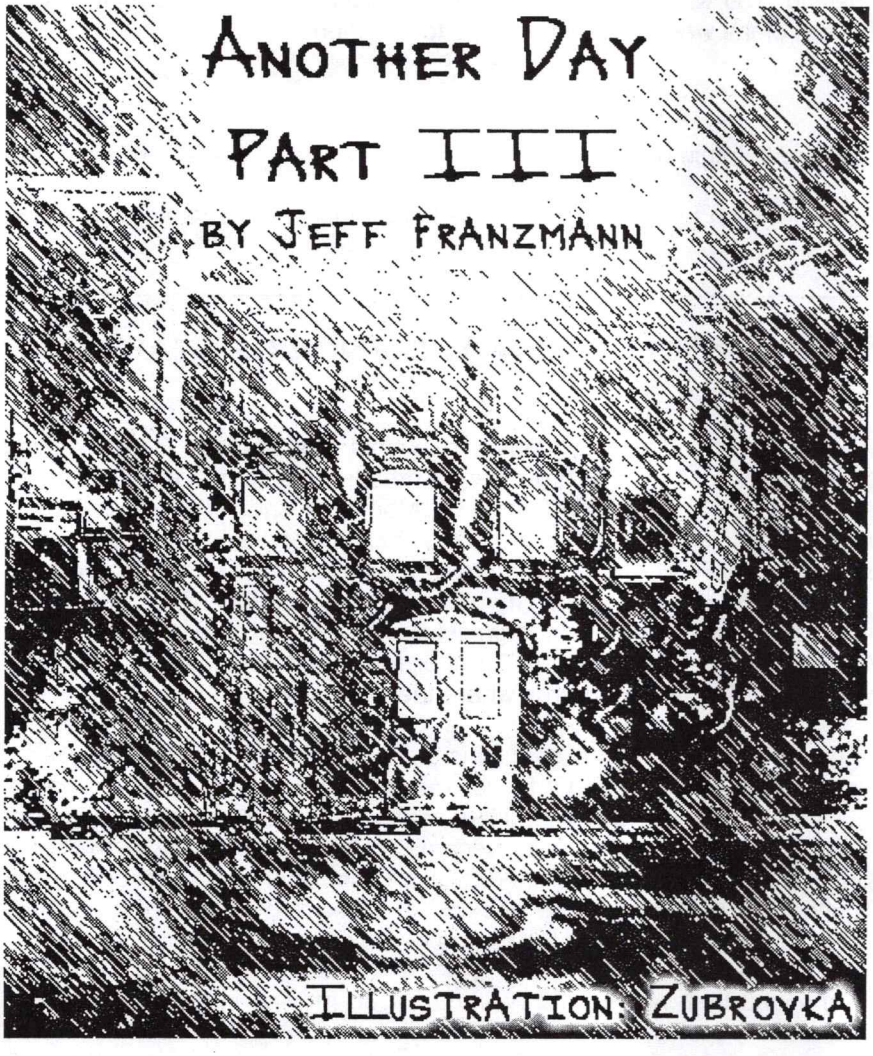


There's a low hum in the back of my mind, that insistent electrical droning you feel when you've spent entirely too much time watching TV, or sitting on the computer. The silence always amplifies it, emphasizes the artificial nature of the company you keep.

Only this time, no one's left the TV set on, or forgotten to power down their system. I stand before the empty pews, wiping a film of rust red dust from the pulpit and wonder exactly what it is that I can say. I wonder if I'm the only one who ever gave a eulogy for everything that ever lived, and the only answer that makes sense is no. Everyone who ever stood here before me had the same reason for doing so, and for so very many of them it must have seemed the end of the world.

It is the end of the world.

That vacuum, that gnawing, aching reminder that something is no longer where it should be. And still, nothing adequate comes to mind. Those who came before me, their loss is something I will never understand, just as mine is something they would not understand. How can you possible explain something that defies explanation?

The hand of God made manifest?

Yes Lisa, there is a God. And he is a wrathful, vengeful one.

Maybe the combined sins of Middle America's trailer parks proved just a little too much for the big guy. Maybe it just happened because it needed to happen. I could spend the rest of my life, whatever that might be worth, trying to fathom the reasons for what took place, and the only thing I will ever really understand is that I will never understand.

So here I am. What do I say?

That I should have spent less time watching Springer and more time appreciating what was around me? That I should have known what I had, and spent less time wishing for what I hadn't? That I should have worn more sunscreen for the apocalypse?

A person like me could go mad contemplating everything that wasn't. I could probably spend the rest of my life wondering why I forgot to watch the last episode of the Simpsons that anyone would ever have the chance to see. I could easily spend as much time wondering why I never said hello to the woman who sat next to me on the bus who wore the faint scent of lilac and so very much black.

I look over my shoulder, and Jesus is crying. Rot runs under his eyes, twin little rivers. I run my finger beneath the lids.

It's not that red.

So here I am, I stand before the empty pews, the son of God's tears between my thumb and forefinger. You would think I would have a captive audience, but when the missiles landed, there were few who sought the solace of the Church. Maybe it was the Rapture, and I was simply left behind. You would think if that were the case, I would have a little more company. Or maybe it is a hell on earth. Maybe the rest of the world is waiting for me to join them.

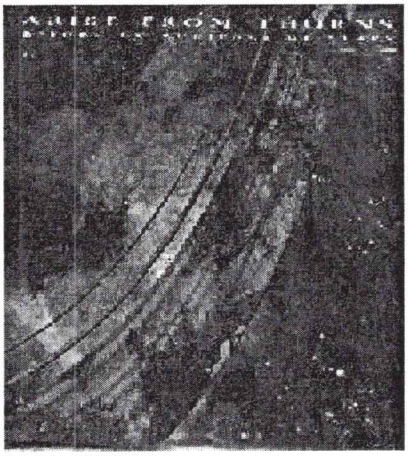
Maybe I am just not supposed to know.

What do I say, now that I am here? Why did I come here to begin with?

Perhaps I simply do not want to forget. Perhaps I do not wish to get over it. And perhaps I just wish to remind the empty world of what exactly it has lost.

REVIEW: ARISE FROM THORNS – "BEFORE AN AUDIENCE OF STARS"

By Marcus Pan



Arise From Thorns is a band that continually reinvents themselves. Core founding members Scott Loose and Trevor Schrotz began creating music in early 1997 under two separate project band names: To Dance By Moonlight and Arise From Thorns. Both were two distinctly different musical styles, the former being an acoustic/folk style and the latter a more metallic format. Not long thereafter the duo removed most of the metal-laced sound of Arise From Thorns, and combined this with the folk style of To Dance By Moonlight to reinvent themselves towards a new direction. The addition of Michelle Loose as pianist to AFT further enhanced the old world feel of the music and moved them further on towards where they are now.

Michelle, after finally being coached to sing, was shortly thereafter the lead vocalist for AFT, and her voice is as close to perfection as one can find in today's ethereal offerings. Their debut album in 1998, self-titled, achieved worldwide acclaim and from this album the single *Remember the Stars* became an instant hit and appeared on a number of compilations. By the end of 1999, Arise From Thorns had become a five piece band, adding bassist Chris Welborn and guitarist Tom Philips. The addition of these two further increased the power of their sound and in November of that year **Before an Audience of Stars** was released to the world.

In 2000, AFT once again reinvented themselves, changed their name to Brave and began moving in more progressive musical directions. New acclaim was garnered in the early part of this year when Dark Symphonies re-released **Before an Audience of Stars** and re-introduced ethereal and dark-folk fans to AFT, while not long later they released a self-released EP under their new name Brave, **Waist Deep in Dark Waters**. Dark Symphonies, knowing a good thing when they find one, will be releasing Brave's upcoming full length album.

I always enjoy writing for the first time about a band with a solid history and interesting past. But without further adieu, let's take a look at the music now that we've covered most of their biography. Classical and medieval in make up like most of Dark Symphonies' artists, Arise From Thorns/Brave utilize a sound similar in form to one of my favorites, This Ascension.

They open **Audience** with the moving and powerful *Dreaming*, immediately from the get-go showing the musicianship of all the members of the band. Acoustic guitars combine with synthesizers and strong female vocals. Michelle is not as high-note diva-esque as you might be used to with this style of composition, instead retaining an alto level and remaining heavy and pushing through the surrounding assortment of instruments to grow above the arrangement without being watered down by all the music taking place around her.

Time Alone is one of my favorites of the album, more of a rock song with an electric guitar heavy chorus. Here her voice mingles among the guitars during the chorus, but remains easily discernible, which in many times is a problem with bands that have a decent number of instruments going at once. This is not a problem here. Michelle is easily one of my favorite singers now, and I find the musical arrangement styles of Trevor and Scott much to my liking.

By the fifth track we're getting softer and slower. Not one of my favorite tracks, *Lure* is still a good song. I particularly like the electric guitar work by Tom here. I also like track 11, *Blue Skies*, which has a commercial appeal to it. Opening with folky acoustic guitar strums with minimal but effective background synth chords, it moves into a stronger rhythm with subtle, interesting bass lines. Their live track, *To Dance By Moonlight*, shows that AFT are as good live as in studio.

I'm very happy with **Before an Audience of Stars**. The band takes old medieval styles of folk and Renaissance and infuse it superbly with modern sensibilities and instrumentation, occasionally injecting it with good rock and roll. For a track closer to the former, listen to *To Dance By Moonlight*. For a taste of the latter, I draw your attention to *Blue Skies*. But all are good tracks and all balance the two musical directions together wonderfully. I look forward to the Dark Symphonies release of Brave's full length album, and am quite curious where this latest reinvention and progressive push will take their music.

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THE PARKING LOT IS FULL

by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek

http://www.plif.com

Great party, man!
SLURP SLURP SLURP
"EVERY TIME YOU LIE TO YOURSELF, WE FEED ON IT."
It's not a perfect job, but the money's good, so I don't mind.
SLURP SLURP SLURP
"WE'RE SO VERY HUNGRY."
... sure, my parents made mistakes, but I don't hold it against them.
SLURP SLURP SLURP
"WE EAT THE BEST PARTS OF YOU. THE LIVING PARTS."
Sue and I are doing great. It's love, man.
SLURP SLURP SLURP
"FEEL IT? RIGHT THERE?"
Yup. Life's pretty good.
SLURP SLURP SLURP
"TELL ME YOU DON'T KNOW YOU'RE HOLLOW."
"TELL ME YOU'RE NOT ALREADY DEAD."

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The Albinor Chronicles Chapter 37
Crimson Snow

By Marcus Pan

April 6, 012

Finally, after a rather harsh winter the weather in the mountains of the dwarven country of Rockhome, it was starting to warm up enough so that the snow cover on the peaks wasn't more than a foot in most areas. Not that it mattered much to this lone traveler clanking his way up the moderate incline in his dented out plate mail. The sun was on its daily descent and the bearded man, a mountain dwarf, was chewing on the end of his braided chin tassel the ground below him leveled off. His cloak was draped around him, although it lie open to the chill wind of the early spring air. He was used to this weather – matter of fact he liked this weather. He breathed it deep, letting the cold seep through him and revitalize his seventy nine year old body. Then he noticed the tracks – boots so it seemed. He looked closer, slowing his previously brisk walk. Dwarven boots – shod with iron in the toes and soled with oil-soaked and hardened leather. The depressions sloped upward in to the level of the surrounding snow – furred around the edges also therefore. Whether for warmth, comfort or show who knows. Who cares? While it wasn't a trail he was on, the land sloping upward and downward and sometimes sharply, it was still a somewhat level track followed often enough between villages here in Rockhome. Dwarves rarely used trails or roads, really. Those were there for the non-dwarven traders that couldn't read the mountains. But the dwarves have lived here since before Albinor's Age Of Beasts and knew these rocky, snow-covered crags well. And this was his land – Gloin's land – for he was king here. He needed no trail to follow through his own land.

For quite some time Gloin traveled o'er his lands through the end of the winter season until now. He traveled it because he had business westward. He also did so because he had sat in the comfort of the rock capitol of Montania for too long. It was right that a man who had won his glory at battle and adventure leave behind the splendor of civilization if only to traipse along the countryside. He had been longing to see his people, shake some rough hands of those that kept his country alive and well in these harsh times. He wanted to see them work and let them know he approved of it. But still – primarily, it was because he missed the cold breezes that awakened him in the weary morn of his traveling youth. When you went higher in the mountains the snow had a different smell – more wild. Untouched and still smooth as glass across the surface of the stone. But here it was touched.

After taking a closer look at the tracks, Gloin followed them around a boulder. He could make out at least three separate impressions in the snow – maybe four. In his travels he had fought off quite a number of ruffians – low level brigands mostly. Bullies – that's all they were. Waiting for someone of his strength and power to show them the error of his ways. He wore finely wrought steel that covered him nearly from head to toe and protected him from their blows. He slew them easily enough. Most wore boots that left impressions like these – furred around the edges for warmth. Figuring that either he'd kill today – and secretly enjoying this possibility as he was, after all, a fighter deep in his heart though he was claimed king now – or he'll get to shake some more cold-cracked hands of his people, he rounded the cliff face that climbed a short distance above him on his right. His armor clanked away as he walked – his bravery lead him to believe that it was better to give up surprise for protection. It works sometimes.

Ah, there they are. Four of them – dwarves in dirty brown tunics and long scraggly beards. Ruffians by the looks. They were looking at him already as he came around the rocks clanking away. Immediately they perceived the novelty of this situation – a lone man in expensively wrought steel and iron. T'was the thought "expensively wrought" that bore the most meaning to them. A loot-ridden man alone – and here they were, the four of them. And their few hundred friends just above on the rise…

It was quite quick, actually. They clutched spears and immediately turned to point them haphazardly at Gloin. He perceived what was to happen and pulled the gleaming and bloodstained axe from his belt. The four advanced and Gloin stepped up to do his heart's bidding – battle to the death. That's when scores more began jumping down from the short cliff above him to the right and suddenly he was taken on all sides. No retreat. But it wasn't retreat on his mind, anyway. It was bloodshed that he thought of, so the more the merrier. And Gloin isn't a man you want to get on your bad side. He was one of the strongest dwarves ever to hold kingship over Rockhome. He was more than happy to prove it again.

It was a fierce battle and a long one. For over an hour he kept smiting men, lopping off arms and blasting his sharpened axe through wooden spear shafts and iron-shod points. They fell one by one, one or more by the minute, yet they kept piling around him. It wasn't luck that helped him win this fight – little of that was needed, at least in the beginning of the battle. Gloin was a lord by level of skill and a king by glory and power. These

men learned such quickly as they stepped up, half dozens swinging upon him at a time. But uselessly their weapons sprang noisily off Gloin's full plate. Occasionally they'd reach through the chinks in the armor or the chained joints to cause a pittance of a wound in the man, but for the most part they swung uselessly, were fended off by Gloin's armor and were struck down fiercely by his axe in a single blow of crushing power.

But after an hour of this the blood from Gloin's body began to trickle from beneath his mail. Eventually the trickles sprang into rivulets and then some of the red stains that flashed brightly in the falling sun was that of his own rather than purely that of his enemies. His muscles clenched and railed at the continuous strain. His legs tired from finding footing in the bloody snow, overstepping bodies that fell before him – quite a few of which were no longer whole. Still the brigands kept coming until a sea of them swarmed about him like ants to a pile of sugar. His arms yelled in pain at his two-fisted swings. His shoulders slowed their pace as the battle wore on and for the first time in years Gloin began to wonder about his continued success. Brutal it was.

He kept on swinging – there really was nothing else he could do besides lay down and die before these men. Hundreds there were. By the time an hour went by there were scores of dead dwarves around him and the snow covered mountains of Rockhome looked like the work of a crimson-loving painter. Blood stung his eyes and nestled its nasty taste on his lips. His power was waning and he knew it – so did they. They kept coming. Filling in cracks that he struck down with his axe the way a river would run into the crags and in between the cliffs of his mountains. His arms felt like they were ready to fall off. The men that came forward to continue to do battle with him mayhap were lower in skill and younger in years, but they were fresh. They hadn't fought yet. He had been fighting for an hour already.

Maybe it was the final shot of adrenaline that coursed through his throbbing muscles. Or maybe it was a small push from the soul forge of his patron, Moradin. Nobody will ever know – but it was his final strike. He knew it would be so the moment he rose his arms as much in defeat as in defiance. His axe came up and the spear of the dwarf before him went up likewise in parry. A man behind him jostled for position to pierce his spear forward. He brought the axe head down against the spear and it broke in two in the man's hands. He arced his blade at the right moment, sending it with continuous momentum into his chest. He stepped forward as the blade hit the leather tunic and felt it give beneath him. Then he felt the skin give – and the axe kept going. Gloin yowled in primal defiance and the axe kept going. It struck the breastbone deep within the confines of the man's chest and blood flew with a fury. The axe kept going. It didn't stop when it broke through the breastbone and hit the spine. It didn't stop when the spine snapped like a twig and exited the dwarf's back, his torso twisting in a grotesque spin like a top and falling over while the legs and abdomen still stood. Still the axe continued it's journey and Gloin almost felt like he had to take another step not to continue the arcing slash – but to keep up with it. It burst through the leather and chest of the jostling man behind the first and when it struck his breastbone a spark actually fired in his chest. He dropped to his knees, gurgled and fell over and finally the axe stopped with Gloin still screaming into the late daylight.

The men all stopped. Silence ensued. This was something new – this lone loot-ridden man now became a source of fear for all that witnessed this blow that struck down two of their comrades at once. The axe dripped the blood to the snow and in the sudden silence that gathered them all up and hung about them like lead you could actually hear it. That's when they panicked. They took off in all directions – dying in battle is one thing. Getting split in two like they were a block of lard on a hot stove? That was quite another thing all together.

It was within a minute of their panicking and tearing off in all manner of directions, snow kicking up and swirling in the cold air like a small contained snowstorm, when Gloin fell over. Not dead, no. But exhausted to a point he can't ever remember having been. Everybody's morale dropped like a stone. For his enemies, this falling morale manifested in fear that made them run. For Gloin, this falling morale made all the muscles of his body simply stop. He slept that night in the blood, guts and bones of his kills. He could do nothing else.

It didn't take too long for the knights of Rockhome to round up most of the fear-stricken men that faced their king that day. Few even bothered to put up much of a fight after what they've seen. Those that didn't run away lay in the snow – nearly five score dead by the hand of a single man. Gloin awoke eventually – his axe still gripped in his fists. And he hurt. Countless small wounds had become one aching large one as far as his beaten body was concerned. But he'll heal eventually. But he'll be damned if he'll ever forget this fight.

REVIEW: GABOR CSUPO – "LIQUID FIRE"

By Zubrovka

I'm hallucinating. Csupo, gawd almighty, has sliced open my brain and stolen my acidic memories, only to pump them back at me through my speakers! And then there was realization, the lucid and the sublime...

Fire
Fast moving into the electronic arena, almost in syncopation, framing carefree vocals and the synths burn you till the bottoms drops out and the slow trip begins. Strings, subtle into heaviness, as the beat rises and drops and rises and drops. A world market of voices and sounds.

Luxury synths and the trance beat, trance talk, bending me, you can bend your brain can't you? I feel it bending in its cavity, bending and squeezing the sound information, urgently trying to decipher.

The bass comes on you hard and fast, the rhetoric lyrics and then back to the mind squeeze...feel the heat? It surrounds me and I want to move, increase it. Glimpse the costumed people, sweet and saturated in the flames of thought.

I am not fooled by this, I know the electronics is contrived trance, but no, it's bent correctly and I see bits of brain matter dripping out of my ear, flaming to the floor, there goes that exotic melody again, feel like a spice trader crawling through the ether of now. Ahhhh she's beautiful and wicked, scarves flying, spinning in a dizzy circle.

Liquid
Submerge, feel the bubbles cool my skin. I've craved this before, this cool sin, listen to her. The emotions flow. The trance is back, it's cooler, it's feminine. This where the colours get vivid, right here and they no longer burn.

Throw out the Kitaro, the Tangerine Dream, the Jean Michel Jarre. Gabor Csupo just stole the show. Literally, my cup runneth over! "I love it, beautiful..."

35 tracks on 2 CD's. **Fire** will burn your passions, stir your emotions, 19 tracks of mind bending erotica blended brain. **Liquid** comes back to console you, 16 tracks bring you back from the heat, cool you down and transmute your mind into a shock studio of cool colours.

Anyone for the dust of my brain?

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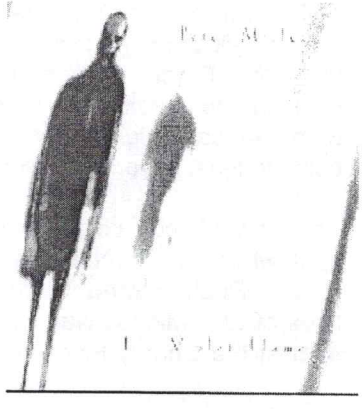
REVIEW: PETER MILLER – "THE VIOLET FLAME"

By Zubrovka

Ewwwww, this is a good one. Peter Miller grabs you right in the door with the very eurhythmic track, *From the Dairy of Madeline Usher.* All my life I've had a fear of premature burial," intones the female voice as creaking doors, moans of despair and the click click click of someone walking emerge from the music.



The second track, *Johnny Panic* is a deeply woven piano mood piece and sets the stage for track 3, *Titanica*. I can close my eyes with this one and see the huge ship resting on the ocean floor, faint strains of music flowing from its ghost piano amid the depth finder ping and distant roar of the water. Rounded out with voices and a pipe organ dirge, it very well personifies the feeling of death and abandonment.

At Dark's Carnival, I am reminded of how elusive the evil was in the movie *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. The desire for immortality is once again beckoned with by the

mysterious and the perverse. *The Haunted Lake*... Phew, it makes me wonder if Miller has been out there listening or is this just machinations in his mind? If you've ever spent any time at night alone near water, this one will come home to you. Playing with those sounds, echoes of nameless animals, reaching out to you through the dark. It sends chills down my spine.

Blood and Roses is a gripping, urgent piece. Ever felt someone was following you? This track gives that feeling away. Time to go hide before you are taken... The final track on the CD, *Sleepers*, is infused with train sounds and voices, very subtle. "You look into your eyes, you will see your will deceiving you..."

Miller has found a subtle way to play on our very basic dreams and fears. The music heightens the effects, "the sound of wind is something people do not understand." And on and on...

Very dark and beautiful, all of it.

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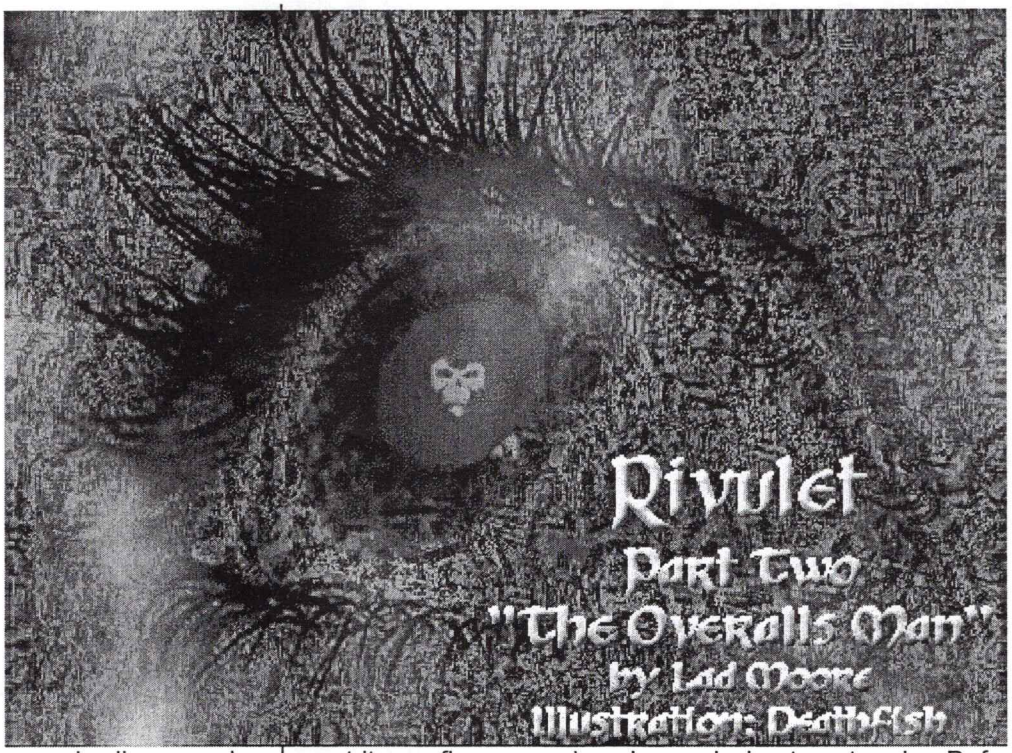


All the corn had been buffered from the cobs and the husks ground into nix for the hogs. This earned Joe Dufo Tuesday afternoons off from his chores. When school was out he raced home to enjoy his brief freedom.

Grain Dufo allowed his son to drive the Ford 8-N tractor as long as it wasn't needed to tow the hay truck through the muddy pits that formed around the animal pens. Joe relished the relief from his thirty milking teats and the purging of honeybee hives. He liked to spend his free time down at the creek that traversed the south end of Low Melody Farm.

It was a calm creek for nine months of the year. Then early spring soakings changed its friendly meander into a swollen snake—full of rage and thrashing its newly discovered bulk about. Runoff from the soggy pastures was like an enema—flushing and cleansing all the loose cockadoo from the Farm. When the pouring of the heavens overran the creek, every Little Ned from two counties came to cast night crawlers into the brown swill that collected just beyond the highway culvert.

The Low Melody corner post stood at another favorite spot where this creek and another converged to form Caddo Pool. Having Caddo Pool inside the property lines of Low Melody was like owning a reserved parking spot at the County Fair. All the Little Neds had to stand at its confluence and seek permission to enter. Joe Dufo denied them all.

"Caddo Pool is but for me," he said, with a smile that revealed a missing front tooth—a consequence of falling from the hayloft. Many of the Neds cursed him and showered stones at him as they stomped away to seek other spots to net their fishes.

Joe Dufo did not worry about their ire. He knew the Neds were fickle. As soon as the fat creek returned to but a tinkle, all of them would retreat to Hank Aaron Park for the summer. Joe once read about the park in the newspaper. The article told about Smokin' Barney

Canson leading off the baseball season with a game-winning double into left field. Final score—5-3 versus Harleton, the neighboring town where Clovis Red Bibb was supposed to wield a mighty hickory bat. Clovis went 0-3 against a better pair of knickers.

Joe Dufo preferred his most hated chore to Hank Aaron kinds of "rule games." He would rather shovel pig cockadoo than play organized games of folly. He relished the unexpected adventures that always awaited him at Low Melody.

Joe looked forward to his 8-N rides every Tuesday. He rode past the cow pens and past the sign that said, *"No Trespassing—Even With Permission."* The sign was fair notice to the Bowers boys who often tried to ravage the Low Melody fields of deer and other game. At neighbor LeMaster's pond, the Bowers boys had begged once to fish and then crank-telephoned the waters to steal all but its lowly mud turtles.

The weekly ride to Caddo Pool was his favorite. This day he saw that the water was full of squirming new fish that had escaped the creeks before they dried. He cast about, catching a few then turning them back—having little enthusiasm.

Joe was preoccupied with thought. He couldn't free his mind of something he learned at school. In his bib pocket was the lesson note he made in Miss Happy Herndon's history class. He had written it down—it was something she read to the class about a war general named Patton. Joe retrieved the note and read it again. In gist it said that after winning a host of heralded battles, a scribe whispered a warning in Patton's ear. It was the same warning once passed to Caesar:

"All fame is fleeting," said the scribe.

Joe was pondering the warning when he noted with some alarm that Caddo Pool was something less than two-thirds the size of just two weeks ago. He had noted its level by the lone spine of a Devil's Spear, which was growing between the sandstone shelf and the water. The spine was half-a-pig higher above the water than it was before. For a minute Joe thought about raising the pool with fresh water from the well. Then he remembered his father's lecture about the precious sanctity of their water:

"Purity, clarity—reserved strictly for the feathery throats of honest toil and to cleanse the sweat from able brow," his father had said. Maybe there was a way around the rule, but not today. The encroaching dusk had begun to dim his view of the pool and whatever possible remedy he might have discovered for it. He cranked the tractor for home.

***

It was both sour and hot. It seared his gums and he dared not swallow its vile juice. Joe had stolen a domino-sized bolt of his father's Red Tag Chewing Tobacco from the cupboard and had ingested its might. It was repulsive—but invigorating—because it sharpened his sense of awareness. The 8-N ran more smoothly today—as if refreshed by some stimulant of its own. He herded its purr down to the rock shelf above Caddo Pool for the fourth time in as many weeks. He spat into the water and it seemed as though hundreds of swirls embraced it in panic.

*Odd, *he thought. The pool was not much more than a bathtub now. He saw fish careening about, desperately seeking a path of escape from the shrinking boundaries. It came upon him that he might rescue them—net them and put them in the big iron-ore pond. But the memory of another of his fathers' rules choked his relish:

"Don't bring no more goldurn blasted varmints up here," his father had said.

Joe started the 8-N and headed for the barn. As he drove through the pine grove into the meadow he was still thinking about saving the fish. But there was little room to guess about the meaning of his father's rule. It reminded him of the time his father whopped him good on the noggin. It was the time he turtled out one last smelly popper—after his father had told him not to fart again in the Nova. Some rules had no crawl space.

And there was a larger more frightening threat if Joe tried to conceal transplanting the fish—even if he allowed that fish were not varmints:

"Be sure your sins will find you out," his mother once warned. These were words spoken from pursed lips—lips that once were fuller. Joe noticed that as his mother grew older, most of her features had wandered around on her face, changing sizes and colors. Her lips were shrunken now, settling well beneath her lifelong beehive hairdo.

His mother's warning about the disclosures of all sin had been punctuated with her pointer finger—leveled right at Joe Dufo's middle. The possibility of discovery of all of his secrets rushed forth as the purest form of fright—pouring over his face like warm concrete. He was thinking about his Special Times in the locked bathroom.

All this surfacing fear had his stomach moving on centipede legs toward his throat. Joe turned back the tide of vomit by thinking of fig preserves. His mama's fig preserves were saved back special for happy times—like the time he got a C in arithmetic.

***

The last week of school passed and Joe found Caddo Pool even smaller. The fish were at its surface, pecking wisps of air and then diving away quickly as if to conceal their certain defeat. The north end of the pool had already become skunky. It emitted a gassy stench that reminded Joe of the crotch part of his weeklong gym shorts. Most of the fingerlings were missing from their once-swelled ranks. The big fish Joe had named Mr. Majestic must have consumed most of the little ones. But even Mr. M was surrendering now. He was breathing in staccato gasps on the surface of what was becoming an ever- thickening muck.

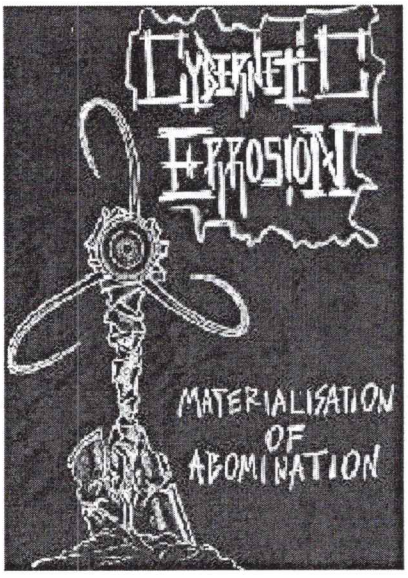
***

The 8-N chummed to a halt and lurched forward to seize the next cog in the gear. Joe dismounted to survey the pool. It looked like gray palette with no colored crayons. Along its cracking floor were scores of tiny-fingered imprints from coon and possum paw. Caddo Pool was now a septic of ghosts. The large fish was gone—as were the last of his faithful. Not even bones were left to someday cite the history of Mr. Majestic's last struggle.

It was exactly as the scribe said: *All fame is fleeting.*

REVIEW: CYBERNETIC EROSION – "MATERIALISATION OF ABOMINATION"

By Chris Eissing



In today's pop-song, MTV/radio world few groups have the ability to be ambient or fully let their visions come through in the recorded work. While Cybernetic Erosion breaks little ground with its music, it is as strong and entertaining an example of a complete body of work. Cybernetic Erosion is the brainchild of Vadim Ozvald Davidson, Russian native.

Reminiscent of Bauhaus, Cybernetic Erosion experiments with combining divergent styles and melody, seeks to create musical environments, and is willing to let a song be as long as it needs to be. Its works are truly ambient while never being able to be mistaken for trance or new age.

Vadim is not just another collar-wearing, black-clothed, pale skin goth looking dude with long dark hair and all the black beauty product Mary Kay's got. Any Russian-born goth that can survive teen years in Tennessee is going to come away rather self-aware.

Vadim's 12 years of education in Russian music schools is highly evident in the, at times almost baroque, arrangements. However Cybernetic Erosion's songs sometimes suffer from this. Many of their songs have aspects that were improvised during recording. This definitely gives them a sound that is a little rough around the edges and unpredictable. There are moments where it is evident that talent, rather than attention, has driven a song. For the most part it works. There are moments, as with the vocals, where this weakens the songs.

Some of my favorite songs?

Erosive Prayer – Powerful fucking tune. It is solid like cool liquid metal, flowing slowly with great weight and strength, yet with an intensity of rhythm that belies its imminent qualities.

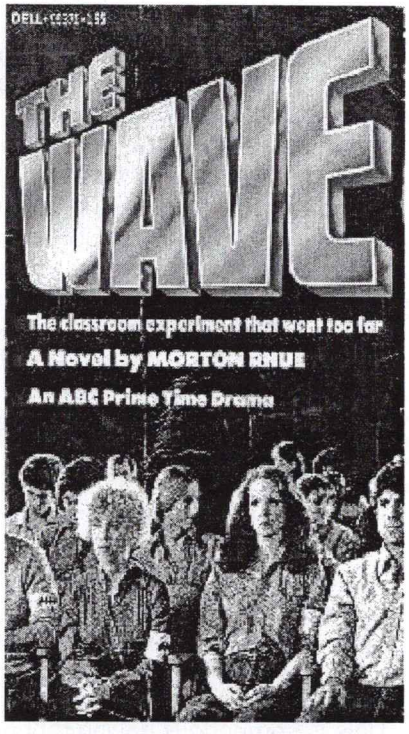
Limited Access – Nice ambient work. Its use of voice and tone reminds me of tape-loop groundbreakers Negativland

Materialisation of Abomination – Simply put? Darkwave with all the trimmings.

Contact Information:
Web: http://artists.mp3s.com/artists/236/cybernetic_erosion.html

OFF THE SHELF
THE WAVE

By Marcus Pan



In 1969 in Palo Alto California, a history teacher by the name of Ben Ross decided to answer a question that many have asked concerning the Nazi rise of power in Germany prior and during World War II. The question at hand: How did an entire populace find themselves following to the letter the orders of a single man and even though the Nazis themselves were a minority party within the country, just how were they able to perform the atrocities they did without the rest of the country doing anything about it? And, in the end, how could the country claim lack of knowledge surrounding the events?

This very same question was raised after Ross showed one of his history classes a film depicting the death camps of Nazi Germany. Ben Ross realized he didn't have these answers his students were asking. And being one that is interested and who cares when his students ask him questions and show interest in their studies (quite lacking in most of today's school systems, it seems), he began to research these questions only to find that no books or other media had the answers either.

What followed was a sociological experiment that Ben Ross attempted with his class. Beginning with simple slogans like "Strength through discipline! Strength through community!" he began a short lived movement that he dubbed The Wave. The result was quite fascinating. The students began to react and believe in this movement as something more than an experiment. They became willing guinea pigs under the leadership of Ross, who himself also began to succumb to the thirst for power that a small taste of it gave him.

The Wave swept through the school. Shortly thereafter, other classes were joining. Then other grades. Then violence began to erupt as those who believed in the movement began to push against those who didn't want to join. Some didn't want to join because they found it scary or creepy, while others didn't want to join simply because they didn't find an interest in it. School functions and football games became segregated, members of The Wave having to salute to gain access. Those not part of the movement began to be shunned and ostracized. The school newspaper printed stories about the bad side of the movement, and the high school editor received threats and scare tactics to be forced not to print any more information against the movement – freedom of speech is usually the first to go to silence the critics.

And so Ben Ross created a monster – and in the interim the experiment helped answer the questions that began the ordeal. The closing rally that ended the movement was catastrophic to some of the members. It took a monumental shock to show the members just what it was they had become. But one question does remain – just how far could The Wave have gone if left to continue? Already the ugly beasts of fascism and fear were rearing their heads – would it have gone all the way?

The Wave is a rather short novel. Generically written, it is nonetheless a fascinating story. I first came across it as a made-for-TV movie in the 80's, though I can't recall if I had seen it in one of my high school classes or at home. But I remembered seeing it when I came across this short book in a library somewhere. It just found its way back to my new house recently, and looking for something quick it became good commute reading.

The Wave by Morton Rhue
Copyright © 1981 by dell Publishing Co., Inc. and T.A.T. Communications Company
Published by Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
ISBN 0-440-99371-7

REBORN

By KT Lowe

I have no problems in believing.
The alternatives are nonviable and invalid.
Every choice is mine if I choose to select
it's my turn and I will go forth, utilize,
I am the master, mistress, whip and slave.

A law is only accepted if it is found necessary and reasonable.
A law is only necessary when someone is in violation,
and most violations are a matter of degree.
I will live by my laws, which I regulate accordingly,
for guilt is the most complete method of punishment.
It lingers in the memories others would bury,
and I rummage through the dead like browsing old books.
I am the codifier of my future so I need speak to no one else.
My only violations, then, will be weakenings of my will, which
I impose without mercy, so I never worry at all.

If I see the world through my innerspace,
I will never understand the whole.
While I can read, exist,
dance, fuck, intellectualise and avoid,
everything I experience must still be internalized;
I will never get the complete picture.
I will never understand,
but neither will anyone else.
Unless someone is paying rapt attention,
no one will believe me when I am
clean enough to demonstrate
the clearest perspective that exists
once it is formed.

When God comes to judge the living,
He will have no one to judge.
We will never have seen him at all.
God has already realized
it is useless to judge the dead.
He will go back to Heaven wondering
where it all went wrong.

Come join me – my law is free
my water is as clear as my eyes.
My mind attuned to the biology of thought,
the logic of love,
spiraled to find my way of life –
it is right for me but death to most.
Maybe you can understand, and I hope you do;
a nation of one is hard to control.
Power for those who need to control
but I promise you will be out of my reach.
A treaty, please,
an agreement to experience
what it is, potentially,
to be me and/or you.
I have no power over your decisions

and the way out is through.
I need to ask you if you will enter into me
your life in my throat I can speak your truth
but I will still need you to clarify to create
so possibly I will grow into my own.

My faith walked for me
to the land of the gods.
lay prostrate before the infinity
that which becomes my fate.
It poured out of me, ran on the ground slow
blood and bread and roses in water.

It abandoned me to its own dream state
leave me naked, cold from the graveside.
Dead in my arms I crouched
in the seaweed sewer to vomit
my bones seeded into branches each soul thrown
through pores through the meat metal I could
no longer trap my lives ahead to channel
Drowned to my knees breath stolen air
in live plant material suckle
from my fingertips to
pull up in smoke
I draw my eyes open with my
fallen eyeteeth
scaled weblegs sludged my nails out
from crystallic hands
I drag myself out of stagnant water –
my beloved has been watching me.

I remember him before I was born
the crimson layers of his hands onto mine
and the pronouncement of my name
when I was accepted.
My beloved close and light
will not clothe me
for fear he would be lying;
the only living presence I have yet to see.
He has dried the last of the mud from me
and will touch me so I see
but he will not speak and the silence is alive
weighed with thoughts I no longer need to express.
I can smell his body before we make love
- the freedom to need, we agreed -
I know the assent in the back of our lives
A lesson in acceptance it was I
who was reborn to a dead world.
the living are no more, they never understood
when there is no death, there are no limits
Nothing is true, everything is permitted
complete, prescient, unique
done unto itself and to me.

Deus Ex Machina

By David Wilkins

The case was solved, the suspect apprehended.

"Mister Cardigan . . . Mister Cardigan. . . ." called Beckett as he puffed, hauling his ample abdomen up the short flight of stairs, tripping only once.

He found the elderly gentleman sitting behind his antique desk, in his accustomed brandywine-colored chair. The padded leather creaked as Cardigan shifted his weight.

"Come in, come in, my dear Mister Beckett," said Cardigan, smiling ever so faintly. The heavier man's visits had become a regular occurrence over the past four months or so. One could pretty much set his watch by him. But today, he was exactly one hour and thirty-six minutes early.

"Mister Cardigan," puffed Beckett, now beaming, "you did it. I knew you would, I knew it."

Devon Cardigan silently reached out and straightened a slightly crooked envelope.

"But," Beckett continued, "how did you know? I looked all through the files like you said, but I found nothing out of the ordinary. Tell me, Sir, what did it for you? What gave him away?"

Devon smiled and said, "You see, my indispensable colleague, I found myself also rather in the dark on this case. However, just as I was about to admit defeat, I received what you may call a 'tip.'"

"A tip, Sir?" asked Beckett, still somewhat flushed at being called *indispensable*.

"Indeed. I sat here, in my office, perusing some journals, attempting to see the case from some other angle, to look at it differently, if you see what I mean."

Beckett was slowly nodding.

"Anyroad, I was getting nowhere and preparing to return to my home. Just then the telephone buzzed--let's see, that would have been about one-thirty. . . ."

"What? Just then, Sir?" exclaimed Beckett.

"Indeed," returned the elder, "Just then. An anonymous call. The caller, a middle-aged, white male from the sound of him, informed me concerning a certain lower-level government official."

"Mister Hawthorne--the perp!" again exclaimed Beckett.

"Indeed, the . . . perp. Apparently, he had, under an assumed name, acquired an account at the local vault. Once those holdings were added to the information contained on our own diskette, proving his guilt was a mere matter of paperwork."

"But Sir," Beckett piped up, "whoever was the tipper--the caller, I mean?"

"That," intoned Devon Cardigan with a dignified air, "may remain forever a mystery."

Beckett was never to know, but years later, Cardigan, old, sick, and bedridden, would have a singular, fragmented glimpse of the irrelevant truth.

***

> Amyl walked through the crowded, filthy city streets, lights both bright and dim throwing half a dozen thin shadows of her and her huge, pink fedora. She skipped, laughing, over greasy puddles of pooled water and scattered refuse. A small burp--the remnants of her earlier cheese-dog--escaped her. She giggled and covered her lower lip with one small white hand. She burped again, then twirled, her skirt billowing around her as she skipped over another tiny rivulet of the city's fetid liquid.

Gonna find Mallory she thought gently, her lips softly moving.

Mallory lived in a nearby brownstone. Amyl would arrive in minutes, but she knew her friend would not be there. Mallory was never home. Instead, the whole collection of pervs and huffers and nodders probably would be--Mal was certainly popular.

Oh well, she smiled and snorted, *maybe Ghoul will be sober enough to find his* Midnight Syndicate *CD. Hah! I've sure got high friends in places.*

She elbowed gently through the crowd. The lights of a nearby marquis slashed faded red ribbons across her face and breasts. Her paige-cut brown hair positively glowed in the amber lights of the stores and clubs. Finally, she rounded the corner into an everyday paradox of big city life. Leaving behind the dazzling and crowded strip, Amyl stepped onto a dark and utterly deserted street. She had to blink to adjust her eyes--eyes forever searching for signs of trouble. Dark brown, sensuous, and seemingly lit from within, those eyes

waltzed from dumpsters, to alleys, to stairwells, to doorways. Mal's apartment was just ahead.

Besides, she was Amyl, charmed; she was forever. The fire had proven that. Months ago, when her parents' house burned down in the middle of the night, *she* was the one who got everyone out safely. Her savior, a malfunctioning alarm clock that she didn't even know she owned, had perished in the blaze. She had found the saving annoyance ringing its warning in her closet.

Yeah, well, your guardian angel has to go to the bathroom sometime, she thought. *Watch your back, Babe.*

She halted her dance-like gait before Number 1028. Entering carefully, ready to use Hai Karate on any perv-freaks, she shuffled to the left-hand door, raised her fist . . . and stopped. No music, no voices, no noise. There should have been. There always *had* been. A twenty-four hour a day buzz. Tonight, nothing.

She knocked in nine sharp raps, some half-forgotten showtune.

Dull, approaching thuds let her know that *someone* was home. Still, the silence was strange. The door creaked open, its hinges long untended, and there stood Mallory, looking sleepy and unhappy.

"Oh, hey Amy. Where ya been?" yawned Mal, the only person still to use her Christian name.

"You know--everywhere. Since the house burned. . . ." trailed Amyl, her lips screwed up from mild confusion. "Where's the mob?"

"Oh! I gotta tell you! Come on in. Hurry! And take off that ridiculous hat!"

Mal, awake and alive now, tugged lightly on Amyl's bare arm. The two hurried to the living room--surprisingly clean and orderly--and sat crosslegged on the sofa. Mal rubbed her brightening eyes and continued. Amyl teasingly placed the fedora upon Mallory's head, pulling the brim down over her eyes.

"Everybody's gone," said Mal, adjusting the huge hat. "See, there was this guy, and he told me that he had been by the apartment and that there was going to be a raid, and I should maybe make some things disappear. And people, too! I had been at Rhonda's this whole week, but the guy found me at a gas station. All the way across town. Well, I thought the guy was maybe a perv, but I cleared everyone out and cleaned up and trashed some stuff. Anyway, the cops busted in about an hour later, right in the middle of *Voyager*."

Amyl's jaw hung open.

"Soooo . . . the cops trashed the place--leaving *meeeee* to clean it up--again! But they didn't find anything. A whole hour and then some, but they found zero. And Ha! Were they pissed!"

Mallory stopped to breathe. Amyl, jaw unhinged, blinked.

"Uh, Mal," began Amyl, "who was the guy who narked on the cops?"

"Oh, him. Dunno, Ames. Never seen him before. Just some guy. He was kinda old, though--at least forty. Oh, and he had this really cool tattoo. Use-Your-Illusion-Art-Magic-Eye-Candy thingees . . . whatever you call it. At first, it just sat there on his chest, looking like some weird blue and yellow squigglies--"

"His chest?" interrupted Amyl.

"Yeah, the dude wasn't *even* wearing a shirt. But that tat--the longer you looked, the more you saw. I know the guy thought I was a major perv, but I couldn't help staring, y'know. No idea where he got that tat, but it was just so weird."

Amyl's eyes, bright and soft, grew into saucers, the perfect match for her gape.

"Ames, listen," confided Mal, "before the guy left, I swear a *hand* reached out of that tattoo. *A hand*--three dimensions, plain as day, reaching out like it wanted to cop a feel or somethin'!"

Flashback, warned Amyl's rational mind. *Nothing but a freaking replay.* She wanted to believe her friend, but c'mon, there *was* a place, after all. A No-Bull Zone, if you will. Mal had crossed it.

Only. . . . Only, this was Mal. Mallory. Her friend. One hundred twenty pounds of straight-shooting. And hey, maybe such a thing was possible.

Modern tech--go fig.

Mal stared, trying to read Amyl's face. Amyl met her gaze, her eyes steady. *I believe*, they said.

***

Jason Abbot entered the tiny motel room with his key. His special silver key. Closing the door, he looked around in the dimness for scratch paper. After a moment's rummaging, he located some, then he reached inside his shirt for a ballpoint.

Amy,

This is for you.
Keep it near at all t

A noise startled him. A key in the door! Caught! How in all the worlds could this happen?

***

Amyl inserted her brass motel-issue key into the numbered door. She was going to collect her things and crash with Mal for a few days. Screw eighteen dollars a night!

Huh, she mused when the lock did not click, *I know I didn't leave it unlocked again.*

She opened the door cautiously, prepared to use Hai Karate on any pervs or creeps. What she saw, though, made her just stand there on the thresh and stare.

An old guy was sitting on her bed. Just sitting there with his head hung, holding something, not moving or anything.

Dead people can't actually sit, can they? her shocked brain fired at her.

***

Jason sat there as the dimness was invaded by a shaft of whiteness. He caressed the object in his hand once, soothingly, then he simply sagged lifelessly, defeated. Amyl's elongated silhouette was thrown at his feet. He never looked around. He had been caught.

"Who in hell are you?" Amyl screamed.

Jason only whistled through his teeth.

"What do you want? Get out, get out, GET OUT!"

He stood, a black steel bottle pinched between two fingers. Finally looking at Amyl, he tossed the bottle onto the bed, reached up and ripped open his shirt.

"I'll be damned! I'm getting the cops, Pervert!"

She almost turned to run, had every intention of doing so, but her eyes quite naturally flickered to his newly-bared chest. And there they would stay. She became fully aware that she was staring, and was most probably in great danger, but there was nothing else that she could do. She stood and stared as if hypnotized, her brain working feverishly to find a familiar pattern within the colored squiggles tattooed on his chest. Her head slowly tilted, her eyes never leaving the emerging pattern.

"Ever so sorry about this, my dear. But you see, I have something for you," spoke Jason slowly, precisely.

His voice: so warm, so sure, so smooth.

Then there it was. A hand. A real-life, perfect little hand. A human hand reaching through this guy's chest! How . . . well, *how cool!*

The absurdity of this thought shocked her into a gasp and a jump. She blinked, and the vision shook, wavered, then was gone. The hand vanished--just blue and yellow squiggles again. But, oh my, how close the man was; she could touch him from where she stood. He could touch *her*! How did she get this far into the room? Only hunger pangs of panic, slight and unconnected.

"The guy. . . ." she mumbled, still a bit dreamy. "Mal. Mal's friend from the apart . . . uh no, from the gas station. You warned her."

"Well, of course I did," Jason said. "You were in need of a place to stay. How could I allow that place to be closed up? I didn't want your best friend to go to jail."

"Why?" asked Amyl, now only slightly more alert but edging toward the door. "Who are you? Why are you in my *room*? How'd you get in here, anyway?"

"Ahh . . . dear, dear Amy," that voice again. "I have a great many talents. But I also have a gift for you. That bottle on the bed. Take it. Keep it near you at all times--especially tonight. Think of me as you will. *But Keep That Bottle*!"

"What is it?" she asked, nearer the door, talking just to keep him talking, looking at the black bottle as though it were a snake.

"Mace," replied Jason matter-of-factly. "You'll need it. Tonight. A man will attack you, but you will be ready for him. You don't have to understand, just be prepared."

"What!" Amyl was once again standing in the doorway, his spell not quite broken. "Is someone after me? Did you find out and come to warn me like you did with Mallory?"

"Something like that," he spoke, his face grave, "but why I'm here is much more complicated than that. I can't go into it right now."

"Well, you'd better tell me something, you James Bond wannabe. I know Hai Karate! Speak," she commanded, her brown eyes as hard as steel. But wasn't there a

playful glint to them? Then again, hadn't there always been?

"I've told you all I can," he whispered. But she was staring absolute *daggers* at him. He lowered his gaze.

"Ok," he said hoarsely. "You'd better sit down."

Amyl stood where she was. *Yeah! I'm nobody's fool*, warned her eyes.

So he merely stood there; it seemed minutes before he spoke.

"You see," he began, "you were scheduled to die in that fire. . . ."

***

She skipped down the street, untroubled, less than half an hour after spraying down a psycho-perv-thug's eyes with *DropDeadz MegaMace*. She plucked the black metal bottle out of her skirt pocket and looked at it happily, skipping all the while. A confidence welled within her, and, although rarely troubled about who she was or why she did the things she did, she realized and accepted her newfound place in the universe, where she stood in the scheme of things.

It was all true, of course. Jason had never lied to her, and he never would. When he had confessed his total and quite forbidden love for her, she had seen his soul in his eyes, a new youthfulness in his face. *He* was her guardian angel. The one who came to such places as this, bearing gifts and giving information. In a million worlds both tiny and massive, it was Jason who placed anonymous calls at three in the morning, Jason who dropped diamond earrings and incriminating photos where just the right person would find them, and it was Jason who left flares and food and gunpowder in as of yet unneeded lifeboats.

He even said that HE *was the guy who used to leave all those parachutes under the airplane seats*, Amyl giggled in her mind.

A worker of miracles was he, a provider just before the need. *Not fully of the race of Adam*, he had proclaimed.

She hadn't seen him in hours, but she knew he would be around. Right now, he had business with a Hai Karate fighter. That was OK; he would be back. He had said that he would just know before she needed something or was in danger. Also, he wanted to be with her. She remembered it all very well.

"*Just a character in a book? Man, you* ARE *a psycho-perv*!"

So he had had to show her. In an instant, they had traveled within novels, stories, MOVIES*! He had shown her worlds without number, wonderful, horrible, some unfinished.*

"*But you saved me when I was supposed to die! Didn't that screw up our story? Not that I'm not grateful you understand . . . but how did our writer feel?*"

> "*Who cares*," Jason had laughed. "*No, I don't think it messed up the story. Just because you survived doesn't mean he wrote it that way--writer's are notorious liars. Anyway, always remember that the story controls the writer, not the other way around. But at least now you believe me.*"

"*So, I'm not real?*" she had asked. "*Mal? My mother? None of us real?*"

> *He had seen the terror tearing at her soul; he had anguished over that, so he had told her all the truth he knew.*

"*Have you ever felt fake? Like a puppet or a cardboard cutout? Have you ever--even once--decided that you were only the product of someone else's sick imagination?*"

"*Sometimes*," she had admitted, a whine slipping into her voice. "*Yes. Sometimes that's* exactly *how I feel.*" The pain in her eyes had become worse than ever.

"*Well, that proves it then.*" Jason had said softly, the steel of hardened finality in his voice, "*You* are *real--as real as anyone in any world. It's been my experience that only a living soul can feel so alienated, so* unnecessary*!*"

She had believed every word. More importantly, she had seen that he not only believed it as well, but he *knew* it. Something solid deep within his eyes had spoken to her.

Later tonight, she would be staying with Mallory. She was already moved in. Right now, she was a thinking, breathing, vitally alive girl taking charge of the big city. *But tomorrow* . . . she thought, tipping down her huge, pink fedora. *Tomorrow, I just might go skydiving.*

After all, she had friends, even in high places.

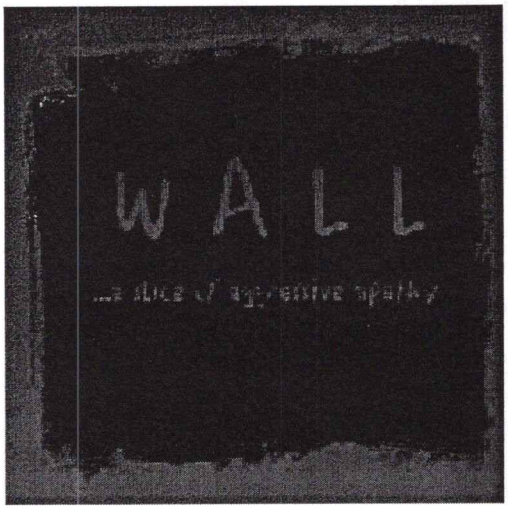
Songs of Albinor Number 19
The Monster Grows

By Marcus Pan

Pierc'ed skull on broad man's chest,
Symbol of rage and conquest.
Factions four have declared war,
And threatened all of Albinor.
Slewing people for their greed,
Lunacy brings on evil deeds.
Crossroads now in iron fist,
And other cities are on their list.
Desperate times cause desperate means,
Heedless of innocent screams.
Pointed on by Sharri's hand,
Her men head off to ravage the land.
Taking what they want by fire,
Many men and many desires.
Darokin may not keep it's lands,
As the horde takes what they demand.
People huddle in the night,
Afraid they might not see next light.
For Darokin is on it's knees,
And Whisperwalk is surely pleased.
To return Darokin to Wilder lands,
Is this the woman's plan?
Or does she kill for killing's sake,
To give death a pow'rful stake?
To show us how fleeting life is,
And how strong death really is.
Just how bloody evil can be,
Is this what she wants us to see?
Who's to say and who's to know?
And as we think her monster grows.

REVIEW: Wall – "A Slice of Aggressive Apathy"

By Zubrovka



The dictionary defines apathy as lack of interest in things that generally arouse interest or concern; indifference. I have tried several times to find something "good" in this CD. The guitarist knows his shred and appears well versed in the metal styles of the late 20th century. After listening to a couple of songs I want to throttle the singer, he reminds me of how the lead from the group, Midnight Oil, would sound after ingesting several qualudes and a couple of quarts of beer. Still, the original lyrics are pretty decent!

I try to overlook the sound quality on the CD, try real hard, but then I know it's possible to get good sound from deftly used analog recording equipment set up in a basement, spare bedroom or garage. This sounds like it was slung together with an indifferent attitude, like maybe recorded on a boom box?

Not being content with my observations, I asked my wife, (a true metal head), to give it a listen. She thought it sucked!

I hate to rail against anyone's creative endeavor, but c'mon, a cover of Britney Spears, *Oops, I Did It Again*? I couldn't stand it when Brit...nay did it and I sure don't want to hear some guy belt it out!

You know, there are some great metal bands out there, Wall isn't one of them. The genre is misleading; sure metal groups do slow ballads, but the synths are too light for the moods the guitars are trying to present. Wall takes the indifference attitude a bit too far and crosses the line between bad attitude and bad taste.

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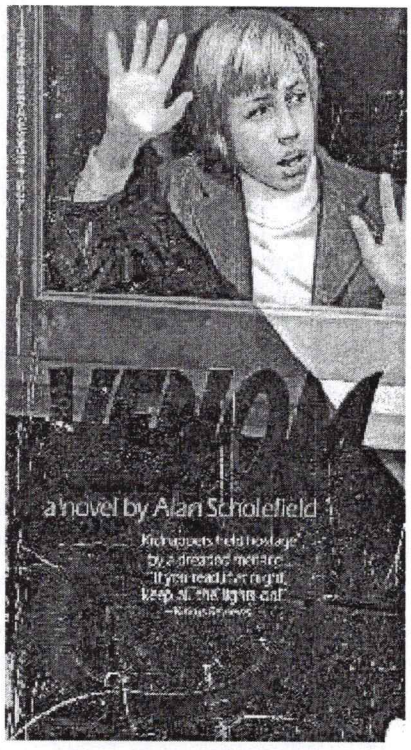
Mike Ventarola presents:
HIDDEN SANCTUARY

OFF THE SHELF
VENOM

By Marcus Pan



Natural horror coming at us again, visiting the popular fear of non-legged reptiles. In *Venom*, a trapper makes a grievous error while catching snakes out in the African plains and labels a black mamba as a harmless African house snake. The black mamba isn't the most powerfully venomous, but it is still nonetheless quite poisonous. What makes it dangerous however is it's extreme aggressiveness, striking without hesitation and feeling threatened by mere vibrations. Where most snakes would run for the hills, the mamba would do the same – but only after injecting a good amount of venom into the foe first.

Like *Slime*, which I reviewed recently, *Venom* takes place in London once again. It also doesn't imbue the snake with extreme qualities and stays true to the snake's true capabilities in nature. Alan Scholefield researched his main character pretty well it seems, occasionally giving us glimpses into the snake's instinctual thought patterns. But rather than being a good natural horror, *Venom* has a number of caveats that keeps it from being that great of a novel.

Scholefield is very good at giving characters width and breadth. So good in fact, that the story would occasionally slip from the matters at hand and end up biographing nearly all the characters within, greatly diminishing the enjoyment of the read. Sure, you know about the past lives of everyone – but not enough time is spent in the present to uphold the suspense that *Venom* is claimed to be carrying. The only character that we spend less time with is the snake – which is silly considering that the mamba is the reason for most of the terror the book claims to bring us.

Here's the backdrop – rich family in London goes away for the weekend leaving the care of their son, Phillip, to the housekeepers and their guest, Howard. Howard is there to protect the kid, actually, being a Great White Hunter who heralds from Kenya and previously ran the man of the house's safari resort there before being mauled by a lion and losing not only a good deal of intestines, but a whole lot of nerve as well. For a Great White Hunter, the man was a freaking wimp. As we said, the parents are away on holiday, and this is the time that the housekeepers bring in Frenchman Jacmel to kidnap the son for a good bout of cash. Of course it goes awry, and the group is boarded up in the house.

Just prior to the attempted kidnapping, Phillip had gone to the pet store to pick up the house snake that his buddy Howard had bought for him to add to his animal collection. Now the switch that happened on the plains of Africa becomes apparent when the boy returns home with a nice, deadly black mamba. The snake gets loose in the house while the group of kidnappers and hostages are trapped within. At this point the novel turns into a bland police drama with the dealings, negotiations and attempted break ins and stand offs between Jacmel and police chief Bulloch. The snake? Well it just hangs out in the air ducts for a while. We see the snake TWICE through the entire run of the novel (not including the short glimpses into its head, which serve not so much more than a, 'oh hey, before y'all forget, there's this snake around too' and nothing more). It gets a bite on one person, who of course dies from the venom. That's pretty much it. Seems the snake is pretty damn wimpy too.

And that's *Venom* in a nutshell. There's this snake, and at the beginning then at the end of the book it bites things (such as a clock). In the meantime we droll through a bland cop/kidnapping drama, receiving lengthy biographies of all the characters and waiting for the suspense that was promised us on the book's jacket cover. If you're really bored and have nothing better to do, such as removing lint from all your jeans' pockets, then maybe you can give *Venom* a try. Otherwise, pass it by.

"Venom" by Alan Scholefield
Published by Popular Library / CBS Publications
Copyright © 1977 by Alan Sholefield and Anthea Scholefield
ISBN: 0-445-04378-4

FLIGHT OF THE BUMBLEBEE

By Sue Simpson

She sat watching the dappled light of the day disperse through the leaves of the shady oak tree. That tree had stood sentinel over her from the time when eating earthworms and dog poo seemed a perfectly reasonable thing to do. It had stood guard through her years of spotty attitudinal adolescence and mutely watched her become a woman. The garden with its spreading oak had been her sanctuary when the world became scary for as long as she could remember. And still she came to sit on the cold stone bench feeling the gnawing chill rise through her bum. This was a place to ponder and ruminate on the good and bad in the world.

There had been one of those high summer storms. The skies had released a rapid torrent of rain aggressively on the world below and then like a child in a tantrum had worn itself out and the sun shone through again. That's when she had come out to sit and smell the freshly washed garden after its recent ablution. In just those few minutes of hard rain a puddle had formed on the patio in front of her and a large bee had become trapped in the water.

Her gaze became locked on the trapped insect as it turned in frenzied circles of panic. The more it tried to rise out of the water like a phoenix from the flames the more its saturated wings and the weight of its bulbous body anchored it within the puddle. She watched mesmerised, as like a canoeist using only one side of his paddle, the bee seemed only able to turn in ever more stricken circles. Soon it had expended the last reserves of its energy and the bee lay floundering on the surface of the water.

She got up and hunted round the roots of the tree for a twig. Helping the bee survive the puddle would be her good deed for the day. *Gawd knows*, she thought, *I make little enough impression on the world and if the best I can do this day is to save a bee's life then so be it.*

Very gently she eased the blunter end of the stick beneath the bee's fat body and lifted it from the water. As she moved it across to lower it onto a dry piece of rockery, the bee fell from the twig and landed on its back on the patio. Once again she used the stick to roll the insect into an upright position, it buzzed angrily, spread its wings and attempted to take flight.

The bee's wings were leaden with dirty rainwater, they flapped uselessly, slicked together like a feather coated in oil and the skyward launch was an abysmal failure. The bee buzzed in affronted indignation and seemed to slump visibly onto the warming rock.

She sat back down and felt sorry for the bee, it looked as if it might die lying there wet and broken in the sun. She wasn't sure what healed first, whether it was his spirit or his physical condition, but soon he was ready to test his wings again.

Oddly she felt as though some bond had formed between herself and the bee and she decided that it deserved the title of 'He.' She hadn't the remotest idea how to sex bees and the insect's gender would remain ever a mystery to her, but after saving his life it would seem churlish to continue thinking of him as a mere it. He deserved her respect for allowing her the honour of making herself feel good about something. Self-respect, like dry wings was low on the ground that day.

He began to try out his newly washed wings and after a couple of seconds of angry buzzing, he was triumphantly airborne.

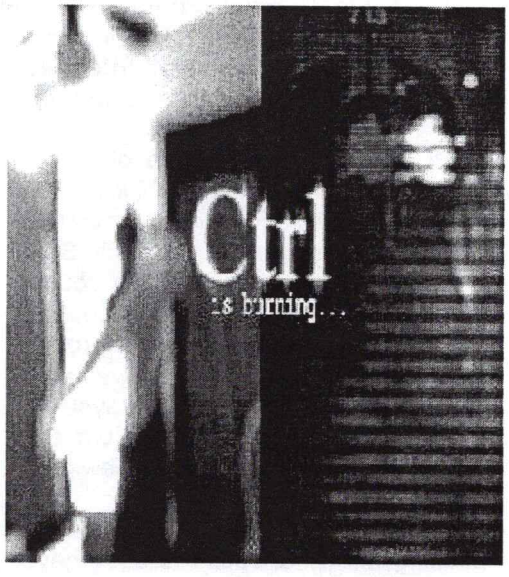
She watched in awed delight as she thought for the first time that a body as cumbersome as his could be carried on wings more light and dainty as the most fragile daisy petal. She bid the bee "Good day" as it flew over the wall and into next door's Eden.

Her own body was cumbersome and she felt trapped within its heavy confines. Like the bee she felt as if she was drowning. Her mind was weighed down and she floundered in the puddle of her life in ever more desperate circles.

Sitting on the cold, stone bench, feeling its coldness seeping through her body, she decided that it was time to let her mind dry in the sun, so that she too could rise and join the flight of the bumblebee.

REVIEW: CTRL – "IS BURNING..."

By Rat Bastard



Secure the Shadow[2], the first full-length release by Texas-based electro/industrial outfit Ctrl, was a testament to what one could do with sufficient talent and a very low budget. The production, although somewhat sparse in places, was more than merely competent, and effectively advertised the fact that Ctrl knew how to put out some good tunes as well.

With **Is Burning...**, Ctrl continue to develop their distinctive brand of electronic rock, though I'm not sure how far they have actually come, technologically speaking. According to the liner notes, the album is dedicated to "anyone who has ever recorded into a stereo tapedeck with a plastic microphone, a radio shack reverb kit, a DOD overdrive pedal, and numerous inexpensive keyboards. And maybe a 486."

Regardless of the actual methods used in the album's recording, **Is Burning...** sounds like a well-polished and professional effort. All of the beats, bleeps, and blops are well mixed and in all of the right places. A variety of vocal effects are used as well, tailored to fit on a song-by-song basis. In short, the album sounds great. If this was done on a shoestring budget, then Ctrl is working with some high quality shoestring; the kind that survives nuclear wars, dog attacks, and can lop off heads when swung with proper force.

Of course, this praise is moot if the music is poorly written. Luckily, this definitely isn't the case. The songs on **Is Burning...** are rich with mood and atmosphere, from the album's aggressive dancefloor stompers, like *WhiteParticleWandering* and *IwantToKnowHer* to the reflective and melancholy *Scot1*, and the more experimental tracks like *InvyVsKusser*. Ctrl pile layers upon layers of sound, while always accentuating each of said layers appropriately. This does cause the vocals to tend to drown in the mix a bit at times (a feature which those who must understand every lyric will no doubt find frustrating. Then again, what fan of EBM/Industrial music actually pays that much attention to lyrics. Certainly not FLA or Funker Vogt fans, at least) . However, these times are the ones in which the vocals play a supplementary role to the rest of the music. Just like any of the other sounds used, they stand out when it is required that they do so.

So, before you shell out that cash to your favorite import distributor to acquire more HiQualityElectronikBodyMusik(tm), be sure to pick up Ctrl's **Is Burning...** It will be cheaper, and will be worth at least as much. And when you do, be sure to tell others about the experience, and help give some more exposure to a band that truly deserves it.

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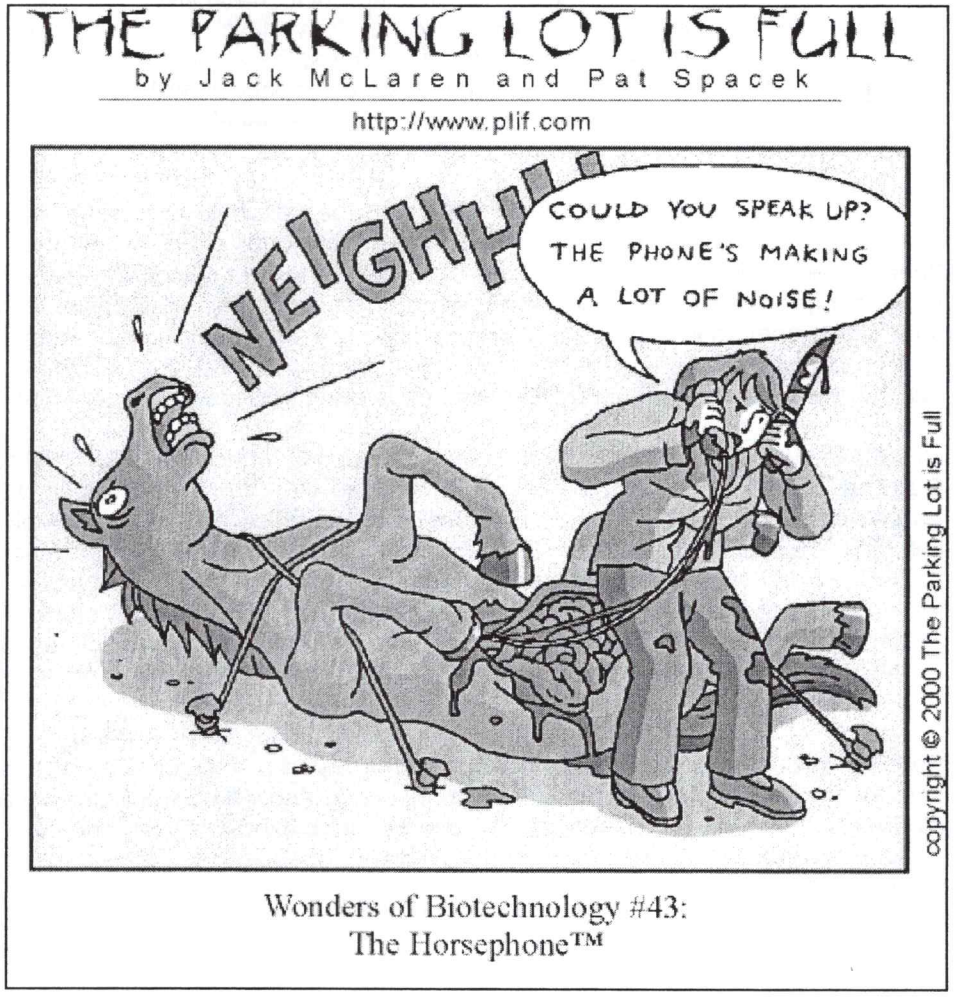
Web: http://analogaether.com/ctrl/

[2] Reviewed in Legends #87 – 6/99.

Afterword

Some of you may remember back in issue #111 (June), we had a fine cover designed in full by **Rev. Daryl Litts**, that featured **Jim Thirwell (Foetus, DJ Otefsu...)** along with a feature interview. Next month we will do something similar with another cover design by the Rev., and featuring his exclusive interview with **Fektion Fekler**. I also have tentatively scheduled the first of the **C7 Interview** series with **Rat Bastard**'s talk with **Sunshine Blind** which occurred a few hours before they took the stage at **Limelight, NYC** on August 17th.

We'll have another episode of *Another Day* by **Jeff Franzmann** with illustration by **Zubrovka**. We also feature a gothic/comic horror called *Pick Up the Pieces* which will contain illustration by our newest member on the art/ill. Staff – **Michael Auger**. I'll throw a couple from **The Parking Lot is Full**, another dose of **Sue Simpson** and we'll round it out with a pile of music reviews and a handful of book reviews. Maybe I'll throw in a good bunch in the **Off the Shelf** column...such as reviews of three by **Neil Gaiman**.


THE PARKING LOT IS FULL
by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek
http://www.plif.com
NEIGHH!!
COULD YOU SPEAK UP? THE PHONE'S MAKING A LOT OF NOISE!
copyright © 2000 The Parking Lot is Full
Wonders of Biotechnology #43:
The Horsephone™

Looking further ahead, I already gave you a good rundown of some upcoming things in the *Editor's Notes* this month. So I'll leave off with two final things...

First – check out the official Legends merchandise at **www.cafepress.com/legendsmag**. The store is run by the **Mean Little Man** and he's worked up some fine designs to start with. There's still a bit of construction going on about the place, so watch your step and be careful, but pick up a few shirts or what-not.

Second – we'll close with a bit of wackiness. Another **PLIF!** And then Mike's **MP3** column to finish it off.

Peace, Love and All the Trimmings.!

Marcus Pan
August 26, 2001
10:55 AM

LEGENDS ONLINE
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WWW.LEGENDSMAGAZINE.NET

MP3: The Music Revolution

By Mike Ventarola

As always, I would like to begin this column with some online shops that consumers should get to know for their quality, service and customer support.

TOP BUSINESSES OF THE MONTH

Things From Another World www.tfaw.com is one place to find just about any film in the horror Sci-Fi genres. In addition, they carry a multitude of collectable toys and even have a VERY inexpensive Living Dead Doll. For those who have hunted on Ebay for these dolls, you will appreciate being able to obtain one for around $20 without getting gouged at the auction. Orders over $100 will ship 2-day air automatically and can be a bit pricey. The shipping however is a blessing because the company can keep track of the package while in transit. They are exceptional about sending you emails to let you know the status of your order along the way.

Another great shop that Goth's in particular would like is Capricorn's Lair www.capricornslair.com If you are hunting for a coffin wallet, look no further, as they have them in leather at a price tag that is around $43. Before you balk at the price, the wallet is a nice size without being cumbersome. The interior has many slots for credit/bank cards and the inside section that would hold money or paper is open on both sides of the coffin itself. There is also a change pocket too. If that isn't enough, they have just about anything under the sun that would relate to the goth, pagan, and alternative lifestyles and have done rather well to be the comprehensive one stop type of shop. This was yet another company that keeps its customers informed about the status of their order. They ship about 300 orders a day and also have their own magazine with 16,000 subscribers. Considering the numbers that the company deals with daily, it is amazing that they can give such excellent, pleasant, personalized service.

HEALTHWATCH

Diabetes is no joke folks, and it is becoming rather rampant. If you find yourself experiencing excessive thirst, frequent urination, especially at night, and light-headedness, or unexplainable exhaustion, PLEASE go to your doctor to get it checked. This is a slow and silent killer that affects every part of your body. If unchecked, it leads to blindness as well as gangrene, which would result in amputations of bodily parts. This is even more important if you have a family history of it.

MUSIC NEWS

The band Abney Park seems to have a limitless supply of energy. They recently started a record label, and are in negotiations with Museum, Hungry Lucy, In the Nursery, Girl Next Door, Sinforosa, Cosmopop, and more. The website can be found at www.abneypark.com/die

In addition to the business side of things, the band recently released a bunch of songs in the last couple months, like Child King, and Twisted and Broken. Child king is their first venture into the Trip Hop Genre (and its really dark and cool). Its the story of a spoiled Child Emperor, and has a very cool South East Asian feel.

Twisted and Broken is a very metaphoric song about being the child of a broken family, and how that effects who you are as an adult (it is an insight into lead singer Robert's own childhood). It poses the question "If I was built by a broken machine, how could I be whole?" The story is all told (in Abney Park Fashion) through an "Edward Scissorhands" metaphor.

The Soil Bleeds Black will have a limited edition Picture Disc 7inch EP released in October / November 2001 through World Serpent. This EP features a medieval version of the children's verse, "Ring Around the Rosey," based upon the 14th century black plague. Also included are three traditional songs interpreted by the band. http://www.erols.com/tsbb

The Fossil Dungeon will have four new titles available during August / September. These include limited CDR productions from the Dark Muse, Arcane Art, and the 15 Delights of Dionysus. Additionally, the new single from Mephisto Walz is being released in a limited edition of 300 copies, available at Convergence 7. http://www.erols.com/tsbb/fdungeon

On Hallow's Eve, the Fossil Dungeon will release "Priestess," the latest work from Butterfly Messiah, packaged in an extravagant manner. Hexentanz, the medieval witchcraft project with members of Psychonaut and The Soil Bleeds Black will also have their debut 7inch EP released on Oct. 31st. http://www.erols.com/tsbb/fdungeon

For more information on the current endeavours of the Riddick Brothers, please visit the following webpage: http://www.erols.com/tsbb/signature

SPF1000 is playing THE west coast Goth event of the summer, CLUB COVEN 13's SUMMER GOTHIC BALL. This is going to be HUGE! It will be held at the El REY theatre, which has a crowd capacity of about 3000. The

last Coven 13 was held in October to celebrate the airing of their E television special. Coven 13 is the premiere goth club on the west coast, and needless to say, the bands fans are totally ecstatic about their continued exposure and success.

SPF1000 also finished a Marilyn Manson remake for Dwell Records. They covered the song, "I Don't Like the Drugs But The Drugs Like Me" This will be a nationwide release in August, so if you haven't heard of this band yet, you can be sure to shortly!
Also, the forthcoming issue of Newgrave Magazine reviews SPF1000's show from this past May. BEST REVIEW EVER! In addition, these busy little bees are also doing a layout in Blue Blood Magazine for the forthcoming issue.

For those still not in the loop, this band creates the most awesome hybrid of goth/dance industrial music. They are one of the most refreshing bands to come out of the underground as of late and deserve all the accolades heaped upon them.

The band, whose name is Coven 13 (no affiliation with the club of the same name) will be changing their name to 7 13. The name change represents a "balance" within the band, "Seven" being lucky, "13" supposedly being unlucky. It's a symbol of "the good, the bad, the light and the dark," demonstrating a true equilibrium. The band has a few lineup changes and a new album on its way that will rock you to your Goth-Pagan roots!

The new Nina Hagen "The Return of the Mother" is available at a pretty hefty price tag, but I have to say, it is one her best CD's in years! Nina has gone more towards Hinduism and this reflection is evident in her latest work. If you are a hardcore fan, you just have to have this now. Hopefully it will be domestically released at a more approachable price.

Positive Complex is a New York based band with some of the most delicious sounds. I am quite embarrassed that it took me this long to find out about them. Their work can be found at www.mp3.com/positivecomplex The music has great dark dance rifts similar to Suspiria and you owe it to yourself to hear this really excellent band.

We have been mentioning it for months, but it is finally a reality. Luminence Films has released America's Most Haunted Town, a documentary about ghosts in New Hope Pennsylvania. The soundtrack includes music from Claire Voyant and Falling You. The video is available for online purchase at http://www.luminencefilms.com/ The web page also offers some video clips from the film. New Hope is a wonderful town, steeped in history and mystery and it is about time a documentary of this nature was finally completed.

Gothic Beauty Magazine, www.gothicbeauty.com, the first gothic fashion magazine to go to print, is now available at all Hot Topic stores www.hottopic.com Issue # 3 will have an interview with the pensive David Holton of Ashengrace www.mpe3.com/ashengrace Ashengrace previously garnered many accolades for the hit song "Seven." The music ranges from uptempo to entrancing so there is a little of everything for all tastes.

Looking for some updated spooky music to quench your dark ethereal desires? Try some samples from Locura at http://www.mp3.com/LOCURA While many ethereal artists are starting to aim more for a new age sound, Locura maintains the dignity of dark and spooky without sounding cheesy. Check out the song samples on MP3. It's FREE, so what have you got to lose?
Tidbits I have been saving for you:

Rob Zombie's Movie Horror House of 1000 Corpses, Rob Zombie's feature film debut, apparently has scared away the studio that planned to release it. http://www.vh1.com/thewire/content/news/1441440.jhtml

Queen on Broadway? "Bohemian Rhapsody." "Killer Queen." "We Are the Champions." Are these Queen songs not the perfect marriage of heavy metal and show tunes?
http://www.vh1.com/thewire/content/news/1441489.jhtml

The infamous New York Gothic Goddess, Mistress McCutchan has begun working the door to a new party on Tuesday nights at Chaos (you know, the old Bank space on Houston Street and Essex!) It's a very eclectic party of electronic, rock, even vintage salsa and is brought to you by a band called the Star People. If you feel like checking it out, you can do so absolutely FREE by just emailing me your name and names of your guests at morbidoutlook@hotmail.com

New CDs in stock at Digital Ferret 526 S. 5th St., Philadelphia
** Tori Amos tribute featuring Tapping The Vein and Voltaire
** Switchblade Symphony - Sinister Nostalgia featuring remixes by Endanger and Apoptygma Berzerk
** Unquiet Grave 3 featuring Paralysed Age, Endanger, and a Voltaire remix
** Killing Joke - No way back but forward go
** (Wolfsheim) Schiller Mit Heppner - Dream of You - the latest from Wolfsheim; this side project is lighter but still very danceable. This single available in dance remix or chillout remix versions.
** Oomph - Supernova
** Cradle of Filth - Bitter Suites Euro version w/video track
** Rammstein - Links 2 3 4

** Mentallo & The Fixer - Vengeance is Mine
** Fictional - Fictitious (back in stock)
** Duran Duran - Rio - remastered reissue with bonus video tracks
** Pet Shop Boys - Very / Behaviour / Please / Introspective - each reissued with new bonus booklets and bonus 2nd CDs of remixes and B-sides
** Juno Reactor - Masters of the Universe
** Jah Wobble - Largely Live
** Ministry - Greatest Fits
** Schweinstein (back in stock) members of Pig and KMFDM; Japanese import
** Sarah Mclachlan - Remixed (dance floor remixes)
** Apoptygma Berzerk - APBL2000 (Live recording from last tour)
** Proyecto Mirage - Two Tons of Rubble BOX SET
** Pet Shop Boys tribute featuring Cruxshadows, Icon of Coil, Endanger, Cleaner, more!
** Das Ich - Die Propheten ltd. box set (we've got one, and that's it!)
** Marc Almond - Glorious (new single from new album which we also have...)
** Stickers from Bauhaus, Skinny Puppy and Sisters of Mercy

And of course, you can pick up three different version of Rammstein's new album, Mutter (US version, German version ltd. ed. w/poster and glossy booklet, Japanese version w/bonus track) and both new singles at Digital Ferret. http://www.ferret.com/digital/

Underbelly The online shop with the greatest service has celebrated its 5th year in business! Check out some of the delightful clothing for men and women and even plus sizes at affordable prices: www.underbelly.net"...it is not a crime to be poor, only to dress poorly..."

Tapping The Vein Tells Us:
New Management:
We are very happy & excited to announce that we were recently picked up by the management company, World Entertainment, Inc www.monmouth.com/~worldent/ . They also manage Morbid Angel, The Kovenant and Nile among others. Please visit the site and see what the bands (including us) are up to!

Album:
The new full-length album was finished in June has been sent to Germany to be mastered. We are hoping for a September release date. Thanks to everyone that has written and inquired about it. We appreciate your patience!

Tori Tribute:
The Songs of a Goddess, the Tori Amos Tribute album, is available now at www.cdnow.com for $13.49.

For more info including club addresses and phone numbers, please visit: www.tappingthevein.com

FREE SHEET MUSIC:

Musicians, take note as this handy little site may be of some use to you: http://net4music.com/

ONSTAGE MAGAZINE is looking for a few good bands for a compilation CD to be released with the October issue launch. They have a distribution of about 25,000. For more information go to: http://mi2n.com/press.php3?press_nb=24783

Tired of Muzak?

The band Pyjama Charm recently had their music selected to replace the awful piped in tunes tht we are forced to endure when put on hold with a company. The music is featured with a plastics company at the moment. One can only hope more companies start to look to MP3.com for more selections!

DOLL FACTORY SIGNS WITH NEUE ÄSTHETIK MULTIMEDIA
Seattle dark-alternative / electronica / industrial rock artists DOLL FACTORY have signed a multi-album deal with the independent Neue Ästhetik Multimedia label, and are currently in the studio working on new material for their as-yet-untitled debut for Neue Ästhetik, slated for release in late 2001.

Renowned for past releases from such underground legends as Faith and The Muse and Das Ich, a current roster including such luminaries as Judith, The Shroud, The Brickbats, Holy Cow, and Funhouse, as publishers of the literary and artistic magazine, The Sentimentalist, and for their acclaimed compilation discs such as `Blackout A.D. ~ Beyond the Ruins' (1988) and `Towards the Sky' (2000), Neue Ästhetik shares a philosophy and working relationship with its roster of artists that DOLL FACTORY members Garrick Antikajian and Chris Roy recognized as a fitting home for their upcoming releases.

"We're thankful to be involved with a label that will allow us to work with the label cooperatively, rather than for them as `employees'," explains DOLL FACTORY co-vocalist and multiinstrumentalist Chris Roy. "It was important to us that we find a label that allows us to pursue our own choices in artistic direction, from the music itself down to the cover art and promotional materials - that we go with a label that hasn't lost sight of music as an art form, and not just another commodity in trade. Neue Ästhetik gave us just that."

While music fans are waiting for the debut full-length disc from DOLL FACTORY to be released later this year,

watch for a series of compilation and remix appearances including the already available `The Nature Of Gothic - The Whitby Compilation', available from http://www.gothicnature.co.uk ; Cleopatra Records' `The Unquiet Grave III', available from http://www.cleorecs.com ; and several others to be announced over the course of the year.

DOLL FACTORY founding members Garrick Antikajian and Chris Roy have been writing, recording, and performing together for over 12 years, beginning with early incarnations under such names as Crown of Thorns and Guernica. The latter, named for Picasso's epic painting, disbanded within a year following Antikajian's departure from the band in the early 1990's. The two continued with their own music, Antikajian with his own group, KABEL, in the Los Angeles area, and Roy with Guernica and later with his own projects. The pair later rejoined in Seattle to begin work on what would eventually come to be known as DOLL FACTORY. Since the recording of the band's debut, the self-released PREMONITION CD-EP, DOLL FACTORY has been expanding their audience with club and radio play both in their native U.S. and abroad.

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The Mp3 band Ikarus was discovered on by an A&R of Sonic Images Records/Earthtone Records and their CD "Touch the sun" was released on 30 th of January 2001 worldwide. http://www.earthtone.com The band is also included on different compilations around the globe e.g. Elevation 3 (with Moby, Faithless...); Spirits of the world (with Dead can Dance, Yasue...); Besame; Ambient Northern Lights Vol.2...Even more good news, their song "Praying To Different Gods" is included on the upcoming "The Matrix 2" documentary, which will also be included on the DVD by Warner Bros. For music samples: http://www.mp3.com/ikarus

The band "I Found God" submitted a song for the movie RAT RACE that is a forthcoming studio release. The producers were asking for some very 70's rock guitar-god sounding stuff, so the band came up with is something that sounds like "Smoke on the Water" had a baby with "Cat Scratch Fever."

DEEP SIX RECORDS has just released a 7-inch vinyl single: one side is their song "Satellite" (check this out www.globexplorer.com - spooky) and the other side is the band's cover of "Symptom of the Universe". Deep Six is a very DIY (independent label) that has a really great, good-hearted grass roots thing going on. Some of their other bands, hardcore as they are, may scare you, but give them a chance. It beats waiting for the next *NSYNC CD. www.deepsixrecords.com also available at most underground / Mom and Pop-type record stores.

Some web stations have been playing I Found God in addition to their feature on Hidden Sanctuary. Visit http://soundangelonline.com for some more sonic rock assault.

Pulsar Bleu has a new song is online "Insomnia," which is slated for a movie score as the opening song. The artist recently signed a nonexclusive deal with raw42 records. As of September 2001 a compilation called "Definitive" will be released and Carpe Noctem is part of it. Pulsar Bleu also has done an online interview with them, which will appear in the near future.

The Changelings have finished their fourth full length CD (2 eps in between) and are shopping around for a label... They will be playing at Dragon con again this year (5th year) and promise to have new mp3s to be posted soon.

Well, that's it for this month. Keep tuning in to all the great bands that are available on line. If you find one that should be given some feature time, just drop me a line care of Legends Magazine and I will certainly check them out! Until next time, be good to yourself. Life is short, but your body has to take you through the entire trip single handedly!

Mike Ventarola presents:

HIDDEN SANCTUARY